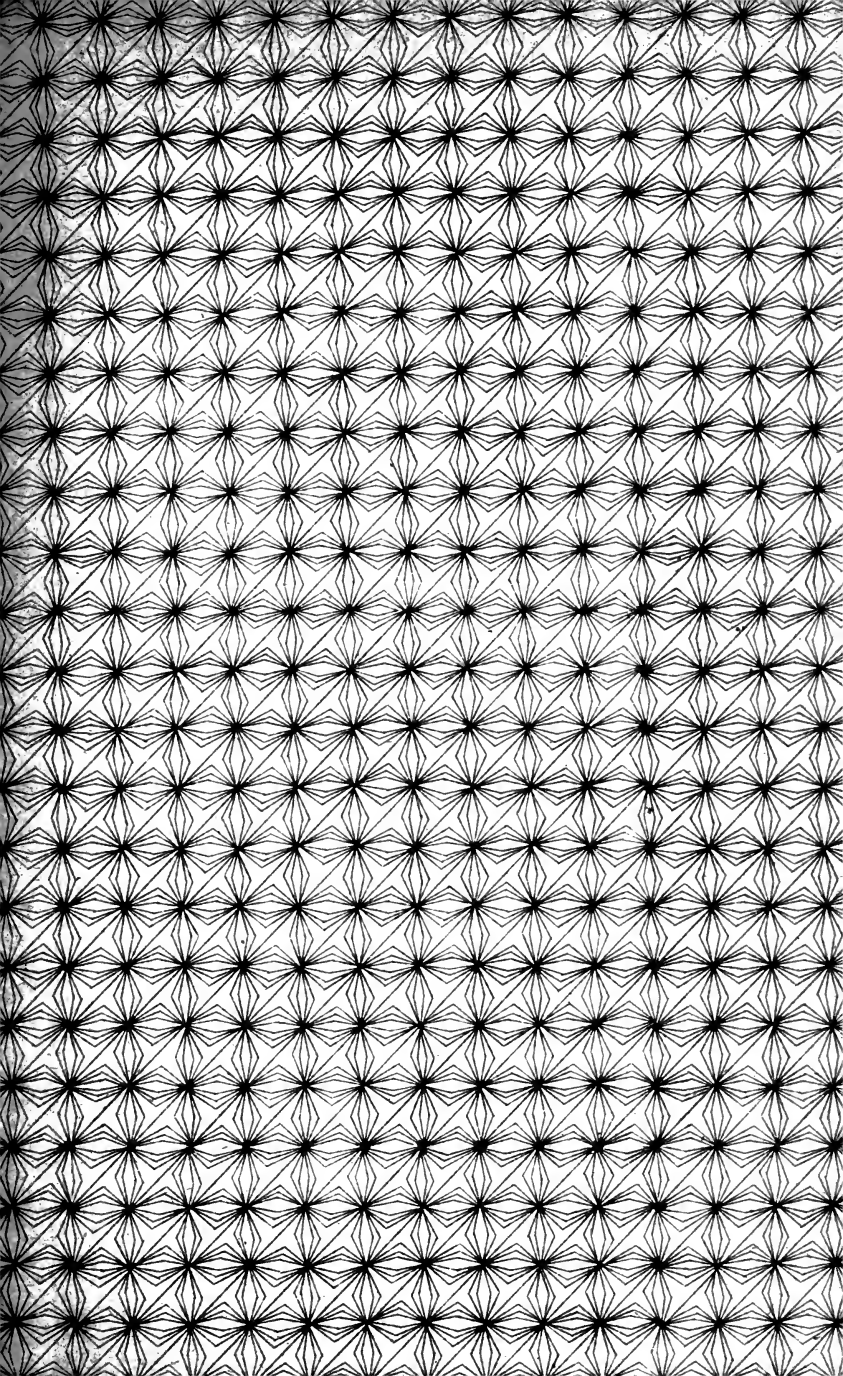


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POEMS AND PLAYS.

BY

DONN PIATT,

Author of "Memories of the Men who Saved the Union," "The Lone Grave
of the Shenandoah, and Other Tales," "The Rev. Melancthon
Poundex," Sunday Meditations," etc.



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POEMS.

The Bloom was on the Alder and the Tassel on the Corn.

I HEARD the bob-white whistle in the dewy breath of
morn;

The bloom was on the alder and the tassel on the corn.

I stood with beating heart beside the babbling Mac-o-chee,
To see my love come down the glen to keep her tryst
with me.

I saw her pace, with quiet grace, the shaded path along,
And pause to pluck a flower, or hear the thrush's song.

Denied by her proud father as a suitor to be seen,
She came to me, with loving trust, my gracious little queen.

Above my station, Heaven knows, that gentle maiden
shone,

For she was belle and wide-beloved, and I a youth un-
known.

The rich and great about her thronged, and sought on
bended knee

For love this gracious princess gave with all her heart to me.

So like a startled fawn, before my longing eyes she stood,
With all the freshness of a girl in flush of womanhood
I trembled as I put my arm about her form divine,
And stammered as, in awkward speech, I begged her to
be mine.

'Tis sweet to hear the pattering rain that lulls a dim-lit
dream;

'Tis sweet to hear the song of birds, and sweet the rip-
pling stream;

'Tis sweet amid the mountain pines to hear the south
wind sigh—

More sweet than these and all besides was th' loving, low
reply.

The little hand I held in mine held all I had in life,
To mold its better destiny and soothe to sleep its strife.

'Tis said that angels watch o'er men, commissioned from
above;

My angel walked with me on earth and gave to me her
love.

Ah! dearest wife, my heart is stirred, my eyes are dimmed
with tears;

I think upon the loving faith of all these bygone years;
For now we stand upon this spot, as in that dewy morn,
With the bloom upon the alder and the tassel on the corn.

Mac-o-chee—I.

MY days among these wilds are spent
In restful, calm repose ;
No carking cares or discontent
Disturb life's fitter close.
Beyond these wooded hills I hear
The world's unceasing roar,
As breaks upon some inland ear,
The tumult of a shore.

To me these are no solitudes ;
For, all by memory tinged,
From somber shadows of the woods
To meadows willow-fringed,
Are peopled with the forms I lost
And loved so long ago,
Ere on life's ocean tempest tossed
I tasted of its woe.

Mac-o-chee—I.

The shy thrush sings for me a strain
No other ear may hear,
That brings to dreamy life again
The forms my heart holds dear ;
The red bird warbles overhead
Its mellow woodland note,
Recalling voices of the dead
Hid in its tiny throat.

The cat-bird carols to the day,
The bob-white whistles free,
The restless jay shrieks far away,
Babbles the Mac-o-chee ;
There 's not a scene nor sound but brings
Its own sweet memory,
There 's not a flower nor shrub but flings
Its magic spell o'er me.

Ah, what to me the ceaseless din,
This fevered thing called life—
What fools may fail, what knaves may win,
In their ignoble strife ?
This world so round is cold and bare,
And tempts me not to roam,
For heartless greed and gaunt-eyed care
Will drive the weary home.

The trees I trim, the flowers I tend,
Have but one sunny mood ;
My honest dog, my trusty friend,
Has no ingratitude.

And, oh, the crowning joy of life,
Where'er that life may be,
Is the true heart that through all strife
Still loving trusts in me !

We Parted at the Omnibus.

WE parted at the omnibus, I never can forget,
Your eyes, my dove, like stars above, with dew were
heavy wet,

Your luggage, love, I handed up, as the driver 'round
did pull,

I could not speak, for, oh! my heart, like the omnibus,
was full.

Your slender hand's six-buttoned glove lay nestling soft
in mine,

Those tender eyes upon me shone in sadness so divine;
"Through life, my love, I go with you," I boldly had
begun,

When spoke a German passenger: "Dere's only zeats
vor vun."

Your miniature I had, my sweet, all painted warm and
bland,

My photograph I handed you, as the agent gave his
hand.

“You’ll write to me, I know you will, this aching heart
to ease,
And every line from you will be”—“Miss, ten cents, if
you please.”

I placed you in a corner, dear, to take that dreary ride,
I saw a pair of checkered pants close sitting at your side;
With gun and hound from out the town to hunt ’t was
going down;

I heard a suit of rusty black call pants a Mister Brown.

With wooden damn the stage door slammed and shut
you from my sight,

I felt, indeed, that all was wrong, when the driver called
“all right.”

Off rolled the yellow misery that took of mine no heed;
Four spanned hatracks prancing, a racker in the lead.

The war came on, and I went off—what patriot heart
could lag?

I seized a musket in my zeal and rallied round the flag;
I left two fingers on the field where gallant Hooker led,
And lost a leg at Shiloh, where Sherman lost his head.

I fought and marched, and starved, alas! the toughest of
our set;

A captain in the line, my girl, a gen’ral by brevet.

Of checkered pants I got a view, resplendent in the blue,
As sutler bold, he rallied too where profits did accrue.

When peace her downy pinions spread o'er all our land
and sea,

I stumped me home, a veteran, with war's sad legacy;
I sought you love, to find, alas! no footing left to me,
For General Brown was to the front, a millionaire was he.

'T was at a grand reunion, given in honor of our cause,
The banners waved, the champagne popped, I got some
wild applause;

I saw you enter, sweet and fair, the General led you down,
You leaned to him with loving trust, he called you Mrs.
Brown.

A Saint.

SO gentle yet so just, so firm and yet so kind,
With never a thought of self to mar the good
And noble nature of her womanhood;
Such as the mother striving us to bind
In links of flowers to our dear Lord, her son.
He sought to lift us to a heaven above—
She brought that heaven down to earth in love
And wrote upon our hearts, "Thy will be done!"
In meek submission to life's sorest ills.
Ah! darling wife, thy sainted patience stills
The tumult of my being. Martyrs die
And leave God's glory here to mark their loss;
You living, bear, with no impatient sigh,
Through all the years, the torture of the cross.

Lake George.

I LINGER sadly, loth to say adieu
To that which of me forms so sweet a part;
The crystal waters, and the mountains blue,
Are mirrored deeply in my heart of heart,
And lake and mountains, rocks and wooded streams,
Now pass from pleasant seeing to my world of dreams.

Upon the lofty wooded mount I stand,
Where erst of old the simple huntsman stood.
I see about me far and wide expand
The scenes of lake and mountains, isles and wood;
Like him I linger loth to break the spell,
That lives in one sad word, and vainly says farewell.

How like vast giants in their deep repose
These mountains rest beneath the autumn day;
From early morn until the evening's close
The dreamy shadows on their summits play;
While in the distance dim they catch the hue
Of heavens, and melt in cloudland's deepest tint of blue.

I stood by lakes where peaks do pierce the sky,
 Snow-clad, and grand in rocky solitudes,
I saw the homes where round them living lie
 Tradition-haunted tales of love and feuds;
Sweet human gossip chased the gloom so drear,
And gave to what was grand humanity more dear.

They had no beauty like to thine, Lake George,
 Where all that's grand, with all that's sweet, entwine.
I see thy fairy isles, while down each gorge
 The birch and maple tint the gloomy pine;
Thy mountain sides are forests wide and deep,
Where song birds nestle and the eagles scream and sweep.

And all is wild, as in that early day
 The nations found a highway on thy shore,
And meeting, battled for a world's wide sway;
 Thy mountains wakened to the mouthing roar
Of deadly cannon, while from out each glen
Came back the doubled thunder to the strife of men.

And all is wild, as when the solemn mind
 Of Cooper told its tale of savage war;
One were not startled in the wood to find
 The sage Mohican, or wild Iroquois,
The dusky shadows of those shadowy things
That will survive our life, in men's imaginings.

Ah! lovely lake, how I do long to dwell
In humble quiet on thy fairy shore,
With rod, and books, and those I love so well,
Forgetting and forgot, live evermore;
To float upon thy water's peaceful sheen,
Where love is life, and life a poet's happy dream.

It may not be, for I am doomed to fight
Where the arena calls for deadly strife,
Facing the throng, to win, like Ishmaelite,
A heritage of hate—a dreary life—
Beloved by few, misunderstood by all,
Where wit seems wantonness and impulse is but gall.

Earth carries daylight in the heart of night,
Swinging its glare amid eternal gloom;
So in our hearts we nurse our own delight,
Nor measure aught by other's hope, or doom;
We are not what we seem to each, and yet
We haste to try and punish, with no vain regret.

But why, in scenes like these, make weak complaint,
Array our little ills, and fight them o'er?
When life is like the shadows, swift and faint,
That dim these waters and are seen no more.
Eternal hills are here, the flower and stream,
Themselves survive the race that pass as in a dream.

Now dies apace the golden autumn day,
Now steal the ghostly shadows from the glen,
The stars are gathering in their glad array,
And stillness falls upon the haunts of men;
Earth parts from me, and closing on my view,
Back to the busy world I go. Fair lake, adieu!

I Know that by the Golden Gate.

I KNOW that by the golden gate,
Where Heaven the sinless see,
Mine own doth longing watch and wait,
In joy to welcome me ;
No subtle change of spirit birth,
Can aught of love disown,
And she—my angel while on earth—
Is mine before God's throne.

No robes of light may hide that form,
No joys can change that voice,
That mid life's dreary toil and storm,
Had made my heart rejoice ;
Ah ! darling, in those blessed spheres,
So far from sin and care,
One voice of praise wells up through tears,
For that I am not there.

Above thy grave, child like apart,
 I wring my hands and weep,
Dread silence chills my aching heart
 To desolation's deep ;
My life had end where thine had birth,
 When freed from care and pain,
And thou, who brought me Heaven on earth,
 Lifts earth to God again.

The Candidate.

THE politician, smooth and bland,
Has many winning ways,
And to and fro throughout the land
He travels all his days.

A modest man, of modest ends,
He runs reluctantly;
He's ever forced, by certain friends,
A candidate to be.

It injures much his business
To be a public func.;
For oftentimes, while under stress,
He getteth beastly drunk.

He speaks a piece to every man,
However low and rude;
Much takes he from newspapers, and
Much is a platitude.

The beer to drink, the babes to kiss,
He hastily doth pass ;
Among the agriculturists
He tramples down the grass.

He asks, with earnest bend of head
After your family,
And be they sick, or well, or dead,
Never a cuss cares he.

*The Dinner Horn.***The Dinner Horn.**

AS SUNG BY OLD SHACK.

DE sun shine hot, as I hoe de cawn,
De sweat rolls down like rain,
Its nuffin but work from early mawn,
Till de stahs peep out again ;
Oh ! white man eats de whitest bread,
De darkey eats de pone,
De white man has de fedder bed,
De darkey shucks an' stone.

Wake up, wake up, ole Dinah,
Ise hoin' here since mawn,
Ise weak as sin, Ise comin' in,
Oh ! blow de dinneh hawn.

De bob-white whistles for his wife,
De cat-bird mews low down,
De jay's a screamin' for de strife,
De crows am cawin' round ;

De woodfrush rolls de music out,
From top ob yonder tree,
Dere's best ob music all about,
But 't aint de best foh me.

Wake up, wake up, ole Dinah,
From day dat I was bawn,
I'd start an' stan', and clap my han',
To heah de dinneh hawn.

De preachah say dat ole Gabril
Has hawn to wake de dead,
He blows from off de highest hill,
An' all jes raise de head;
I wants to heah dat 'ligious toon,
To set dis spirit free,
But Oh! ole Gabe, along 'bout noon!
De dinneh hawn foh me.

Wake up, wake up, ole Dinah,
I perish in de cawn,
Its noon ob sun, de hoe-cake's done,
Oh! blow de dinneh hawn.

Miss Lilley opes pianner,
Dis darkey foh to please,
Her white hands—oh Susanner!
Charm music from de keys;

Dey fluttah like de snow-white bird,
Above de tasseled cawn,
Dey catch my soul—what's dat I heard?
Good Lawd! de dinneh hawn.

Blow high, blow low, Oh! Dinah,
Jes make de windin' stawm,
Foh, high or low, I draps dat hoe,
When comes de dinneh hawn.

*To .———**To ———.*
———

WHEN from the half-forgotten past
Return my youthful days,
And through the rift of clouds o'ercast
The light of memory plays,
My eyes are dimmed with idle tears
That dead affections claim ;
For thy sweet face so sweet appears
At mention of thy name.

I knew thee when we both were young,
And in Bohemia's clime
We lived and laughed and loved and sung
With art alone divine.
Ah! what a subtle, girlish grace
You o'er my pathway threw—
An angel in an earthly place,
So fair and frank and true.

And many a love since that far time
 Rose tints my wild career,
And beauty, wit and grace divine,
 Claims each its smile or tear ;
Yet over all thy earnest eyes
 Return so sweet to me,
As if a single star should rise
 To light a troubled sea.

So you're a mother, matron, sage,
 And I am growing old :
With all the faults of frosty age,
 So cynical and cold ;
And yet my heart within me glows
 When memory o'er it plays,
As sunset tints Sierran snows
 With summer's softest rays.

I hear the waves around me roar,
 And where the dark clouds dip,
Fades out the dim and distant shore,
 As sails our stately ship,
Ah! thus I pass from out my past
 And sweet romance of life,
To where my weary lot is cast
 In bitterness and strife.

The Laborer's Hymn.

THE rich and proud they pass me by,
For I am poorly born,
A workman rough, but naught care I
For all their lofty scorn.
I feel my manhood in me stir
No envy of their greed,
For Christ was bred a carpenter,
And God our work decreed.

My humble home is by the road,
Where my dear ones abide ;
I care not for the rich abode,
Where dwells dishonest pride ;
For peace and love breathe o'er us all,
And we can spurn the scorn
That looked down on the humble stall
Where Christ himself was born.

I know that from our dreary toil
 They steal their silks and lace ;
Their very bread wrought from the soil
 We give them, with their grace ;
And man must sweat where fraud prevails
 And theft holds high command,
For cunning wins, while labor fails,
 Throughout the freest land.

Let not despair our souls enthrall,
 For God is with the right,
And we who feed and foster all
 As readily can smite,
When guant privation haunts the den,
 And children cry for bread,
We wait the painted vermin then,
 When Labor strikes them dead.

We patient beasts, with human hearts,
 Can bear the burden long,
But comes a time when nature starts
 To right the cruel wrong,
As when miasma fills the air,
 With fever's fearful train,
The thunder's roll, the lightning glare,
 And storms come on amain.

The Ohio Boat-Horn.

“O boatman! wind thy horn again.”

WM. O. BUTLER.

O LIST! the boat-horn's soft refrain
O'er eve's still waters, swelling clear,
So wildly sweet, so sad a strain,
Ne'er woke before to charm the ear.
What dreams its melody awakes
Of life upon the lost frontier,
When to the rivers, forests, lakes
There came the sturdy pioneer.

Out on the wave, while floating down,
He boldly trod his little deck,
And dreamed, his dearest close around,
Of wild adventure, storm and wreck;
That strain he wound his way to cheer,
In dewy eve or golden morn,
The startled Indian paused to hear
In echoes sweet his simple horn.

That note erst smote on tower and town
 Its winding challenge, clear and high,
And battling hosts for land and crown,
 Were summoned out to do or die;
And so it herald empire then
 O'er wilds that stretched from sea to sea.
Wild music to the tramp of men
 That told of millions yet to be.

O boatman! wind thy horn again,
 I fain would hear its note once more.
There lives along its magic strain
 The deeds our fathers wrought of yore.
Their forms are moldering into dust,
 Their very homes have passed away,—
How strange your strain should hold in trust
 Their sacred memories from decay!

The Blue Jay.

THE little scamp, I hear his shriek of warning
That tells his blue police the foe is nigh—
A goggle-eyed old owl caught out by morning,
So dazed by light he can not fight nor fly.
From field and forest, haystack, fence and thicket,
Shrieking like fiends they swiftly gather in;
There's no pursuit of gain, or grain, but quick it
Drops the bit for duty in the din.

The night assassin sees in grotesque wonder
Blue streaks about his horned noddle dart;
From side to side they flash—now o'er, now under—
And every prick but make him snap and start.
Ah! have a care, most noble, daring Captain—
A clutch, a snap, a shriek of wild despair:
There's one brave jay beyond the need of Chaplain—
A cloud of feathers flash upon the air.

Then comes a blessed silence of a minute ;
For Death's grim presence even chills a jay.
Brief space for grief, the shrieks again begin it ;
Anon the woods are ringing with the fray.
The downy, pinioned thief, night's dark marauder,
Feels all the anguish of a hopeless fight
With foes despised ; and so in grave disorder
He spreads his wings and fairly takes to flight.

How like a dream he floats o'er field and meadow,
Fast followed by his foes' victorious cries,
To where the burr-oak glen, with trees bent head low,
Dims the fierce light for better use of eyes.
The little scamps accept the situation,
And leave their foe his fortress to command ;
They quick disperse, with shrill congratulation,
To thief like Satan over all the land.

The little Frenchman of the fields and wildwood,
The dashing, daring, handsome cavalier,
Dear companion of my dreamy childhood,
Of all the birds the boldest buccaneer,
Nest robber, orchard thief, round stack and garden,
Busy as sin, with such a business air,
On scare-crow's very hat with corn grain hard in
His little claw he cracks without a care.

When storm clouds gather in the Fall's dark session,
And rain makes music on my maple trees,
While other birds are hushed in damp depression,
The clear "e-lii-ick" floats upon the breeze.
Snow can not cow, nor bitter winter boss 'em ;
No want nor hunger can their spirits tame ;
In Spring with blue they shade the apple blossom,
And Summer finds them shrieking all the same.

Garfield Dead.

“Duncan is in his grave ;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.
Treason has done his worst ; nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing
Can touch him further.”—*Shakespeare.*

HURT unto death and dead at last. In vain
The cry of anguish from the people wrung,
That like a tender mother, tearful hung
In grief sublime,
Counting by pulse-beats the fatal steps of time
Above that bed of pain.
The land was dark with sorrow. From wooded Maine
To where the wide Pacific chafes the Golden Gate,
From blue north lakes down to the flowery state,
From cities, hamlets, mountain, glen, and plain,
E'en from the wilderness,
Wherever a human heart has beat, or human footstep trod,
Went up to God
The cry for succor in our sore distress.
The fearful rent

That internicine war wrought us in twain,
His precious blood is God's cement
To bind us in one brotherhood again.
Grief washed out passion's angry hue,
And mingling tears for him come gray and blue.

In vain
Many selfish factions seek once more to reign,
And stir to life
Our evil passions into bloody strife,
That once our nation's hopes in common ruin blent.
Land whispered unto land. Beneath the solemn main,
Through dark, unfathomed caves, the lightning laden
nerve of life
For an instant trembled with our tale of pain,
And nations paused amid their vexing strife
To send their sorrow back to us again.
Crowned heads were bowed, and back-bent toil,
Watering with unrequited sweat the alien soil,
With uncovered head,
Stood in the presence of our mighty dead.
The dead have lain in state,
The wise, the good, the great—
Soldier, statesman, potentate—
And o'er the land, to grief awake,
Huge bells swinging to and fro,
Solemn and slow,

With iron tongues have told their tales of woe,
While waves of music beat upon the air
In rhythmed sweetness all their wild despair.
It was our living that we laid in state,

And the nation, desolate,
Through the heavy watches with breath abate,
And hearts nigh broken praying for the balm
Of health again; for on that quickening breath
And fever hurried face rode Death
Ah! not for him alone; we saw with dread
The Great Republic hanging by a slender thread;

And he alone was calm.

Patient and brave, as gentle as a child,

He sadly smiled,

While grief around was wild,
And took the chance they gave him. Tender and true,
How sweet and homely were his words of cheer,
In answer to his poor wife's tears and fear,
"Do n't cry, sweetheart; we will yet pull through."
What reck's all glory to that lonely home,
Where sits the mother, aged and alone?
Of all, alas! bereft, sad she sits, and dreams

Upon life's earlier scenes;
Of the hard struggle and her noble son,
Who fought through all until the goal was won;

And in th' hour of triumph, with loving grace,
Turned to kiss her in the nation's place.

She can not feel him dead;
His manly form and noble head
Are ever with her; he's "her baby" still;
The dim perceptions cloud the present o'er,
And save the pains that kill.

The broken rainbow yet its arch retains,
And points to earth like life. Our grave remains,
Whatever glory be for us in store.

God help the brave, true heart
That lost not hope till hope itself was dead—
The loving wife who filled an angel's part,
And smiled to cheer above a heart that bled;
Who crowded down the blinding tears

And anguished fears,
Hiding her pain,
That she alone might nurse her lord to life again.

Our hero's widow is a nation's care,
Her babes the people's own,
Ah, me! of what avail the groan,
The lamentations all must share?

Vain mockery of words. They deeper grief will start
To one who carries dead like this upon her living heart.

Thou art gone,
And the great world goes roaring on—

The cities hum of human life, the roar
Of ocean on the rocky shore ;
Season follows season, and o'er the land,
In sun and storm, the farmer's horny hand
Tills the warm earth ;
Myriads of men have birth,
And myriads are carried to the tomb ;
Birds sing, and flowers bloom,
And shining rivers roll in music to the sea ;
No more, no more ; oh ! never more may we
Turn in our love to thee.

 We search in vain,
By mountain side, or lake, or plain,
Or thy loved solitude
Of thought haunted wood,
 Or rocky glen,
Or mid the busy haunts of men ;
 No more may we our hero see,
Thy kingly form is moldering into dust ;
Thy spirit is with God, we trust ;
 Thy life has passed into a memory.

An Adieu.

THE season 's ended and we part, my belle ;
I try to smile you off, yet find it no go.

It is absurd, and yet my feelings swell

And heart is heavy as your Saratoga,
That holds your many graces and my pain
And marks alike my conquest and your reign.

We met, 't was at a "german"—Mrs. Beal's,

The gayest throng—ah, well I it remember,
The snowy shoulders, and the pointed heels

That swelled a tide of dazzling grace and splendor,
And filled the ancient house from base to attic—
Solons, sailors, soldiers and corps diplomatic.

I saw you, fresh and sweet, among the flirts,

I saw your gorgeous dress direct from Paris ;
You rose a Venus from a sea of skirts,

The world and me, alas, in love to harass,
There was such meaning in your witching smile,
So simply, yet so knowing, guileless guile.

In this first season, out upon your cheek
The color came and went in its sweet way ;
You looked so modest when I came to speak,
And yet so queenly graceful, I could say
Naught of the patronizing rot we hiss
Into the listening ears of wife or miss.

We talked the weather, then we diagnosed
Your parent's ailments—each was ill I know ;
Mamma had indigestion ; papa toed
Rheumatic gout or something in his toe ;
I was so charmed by stomach and by toes
That seemed such music from your lips of rose.

Ah, what an ass is man when man's in love—
An ass he must be then his love to win ;
The Bottom found Titania all a dove,
And we must sigh though all the world may grin ;
And so, my belle, I lifted you on high,
Then breathed my very soul out in a sigh.

We make the thing we worship; you to me,
Too pure and artless were for sinful earth ;
The terrapin I fed you seemed to be
Food for the gods—ah, what a blighting death
Fell on the house, when just at two
Your papa's carriage whirled you from my view.

And so we "germaned" into love at night,
And flirted mildly, dear one, day by day;
At last encouraged by your eyes' soft light,
At Mrs. Stockton's dancing matinee,
I pressed your little hand, so soft and nice,
And told my burning love above an ice.

You blushing, laughed, and laughing looked again
A shy, sweet glance that did my love eclipse,
And ate in silence; oh what blissful pain;
My soul and ice seemed melting on your lips,
Reckless in bliss, entranced, I never stirred,
Though Clarkson Potter heard my lowest word.

'T was after dinner, at your papa's house,
I clasped you to my heart, my all adored,
Whispering accepted love, you little mouse,
While in a chair your solemn papa snored.
I clasped and kissed and begged you mine to be,
You said, "go speak to my paternal B."

You ran away and I awakened him,
Alas, I wakened, too, from dreams of bliss;
Paternal bird, he made my senses swim,
By a few words that fairly seemed to hiss;
"That girl is crazy," cried paternal B.,
"You are the sixth this week she sent to me."

And now adieu, my little witch, adieu,

The season 's ended, take my parting sigh.

Our ways go widening still the wide world through,

The night is done, morn trembles in the sky ;

The love I cherished that once seemed my star,

Dies like the light from this, my last cigar.

A. C. F.

MY eyes are dim with tears unshed,
My heart is stirred with pain,
For memories of the sainted dead,
Are haunting me again.
The blue-bird's carol, on the limb
Where apple blossoms bloom,
Has brought the vision, dear yet dim,
From out its heart-locked tomb.

Sweet spirit of the opening spring,
And incense laden air,
When orchards bloom and wild birds sing,
And earth is fresh and fair;
No violets from the winter wake,
Nor buds burst from the tree,
Nor wood-thrush sings, but join, to make
For thee, a memory.

I see again thy perfect face,
And strangely lustrous eye,
The slender form, the girlish grace,
And ways so frank, yet shy.
Ah! me, what years since then have fled,
Along their troubled way,
And left me here to mourn the dead,
And memorize decay.

The spring returns, but no return
Of life's young love and trust,
Fond memory lingers o'er the urn,
That marks the mold'ring dust;
Alone I pace the pleasant round,
So oft in fancy traced,
Where every rood seems fairy ground,
Her gracious presence graced.

Ah! child of genius little known,
But largely loved on earth,
What careless wit by thee was sown,
What fancies had their birth
To drop, like rose leaves, on the road
That shadowed all thy days;
Dear, gentle form to bear such load,
Along life's dreary ways.

'Tis peace at last, above thy grave
The grass is green again,
The wild birds sing, the flowers wave
Soft falls the silvery rain.
Ah! blessed rest, that ends this coil—
This fevered thing called life—
The long, long sleep that, after toil,
Sooths down our weary strife.

Song.

A HEALTH, a health to Lizzie lass,
And let the wine go round,
For here within each sparkling glass
Her lovely self is found;
Her beauty 's like the bubbling rain,
That dazzles ere 't is past;
Her wit, how like our own champagne,
Can floor us all at last.

Her smile is sunlight, and her laugh
That sunlight set to tune;
Her breath the honey-bee might quaff,
Drowned in its rich perfume.
Flower-born from out the sunny south,
Her form makes stoics sigh,
Love lingers round her rosy mouth,
The devil in her eye.

This night I pressed her little hand,
And breathed my last adieu ;
To-morrow sees my native land
Sink in the waters blue.
Oh! nevermore may eyes of mine
My little darling see.
Oh! comrades, drown me deep in wine,
The world is dead to me.

From an Album.

YOU never asked poor me to bring
My humble tribute to your shrine;
Perchance you thought I could not sing
Where sweeter bards have sung sublime;
But feelings make the song, not words,
Or else our bards were brainless birds.

I've gazed upon thy gentle face,
When little noted, long and oft,
I've loved thy form of witching grace,
And heard thy voice so low and soft:
The charms that common men adore,
Saw these and dreamed of something more

There is a meaning in those eyes,
That few may fathom, all may feel,
Telling of thought that underlies
Our better nature, when we steal,
Prometheus like, another soul
To strengthen, soften, and control.

And can it be that one so young,
 So fair, so fresh, so gay and bright,
Has yet a memory o'er her hung
 That gives us all a second sight?
What see'st thou, oh maiden fair,
To bring this nameless charm and air?

The sea-shell whispers of the sea,
 And evening dew the rose distills,
And, music lives in memory,
 The sound though dead the soul yet thrills,
And each in each itself repeats,
The heart alone its secret keeps.

Oh! shallow fool, to speculate,
 And on such shadow thus refine,
The what thou see'st is but fate
 That waits upon the gift divine,
The genius rare that swiftly flings
What dull experience slowly brings.

My rhyme is ended. Oh! that I
 Could end my sorrows with my song.
I close these pages with a sigh
 And realize the pain of wrong;
For charms thy face and form adorn,
Though born to bliss leave me forlorn.

I send you your Letters.

I SEND you your letters,
Oh! would I might send
The feeling that fetters
My being and end.
Like light on the mountain
These joys of the past,
Eve's rays on the fountain,
The loveliest and last.

Oh! dost thou remember,
The dim little room,
Where gloomy November
Saw our joy and doom?
We met but to sever,
We meet not again;
Ah! vain the endeavor,
The anguish, how vain!

These close-written pages,
 These forms of the past,
In the war the heart wages
 With fate they are cast;
Yet I give them all to thee,
 True heart, once my own,
Let others go woo thee,
 I now am alone.

Mac-o-chee—II.

HOW many a vanished hour, and day,
Have sunlight o'er me shed,
Since last I saw these waters play
Along their pebbly bed.
The bird bent bough above them swings,
The waves dance bright below,
From the hazel near the cat-bird sings,
As in long years ago.

O'er blue-edged height, and sun-lit plain,
Soft falls the purple noon,
On rustling corn, and waving grain,
On stream and still lagoon ;
Hard by the brook the black bird trills,
The glossy coated crow
Croaks hoarsely on the breezy hills,
As in long years ago.

The falcon, like a censor sung,
Circles the blue above,
The quail is calling to her young,
While coos the mournful dove;
The elder bloom, by road and stream,
Lies heaped, like drifted snow,
The meadow birch nods to its dream,
As in long years ago.

The drowsy bee, on laden wings,
Voices the dreamy day,
The squirrel chatters as he swings,
While screams the restless jay;
The mild eyed cattle, slow and grave,
Swish in the shaded pool,
Where hoarse frogs croak, and tall flags wave,
And clear springs bubble cool.

And now, as in that far-off time,
The village sounds are dear,
The cry of children, and the chime
Of bells, break on the ear;
My playmates then are bearded men,
The men wax old and slow,
Or sleep within God's silent glen,
Where broods the long ago.

I may not sing, my eyes so dim,
 I may not sing the change
That wrought upon my soul within,
 Its sadness, still and strange;
Nor here by fragile flower and stream,
 Repeat the well worn lay,
How we the fleeting shadows seem,
 Immortal substance they.

But ah! these trees, and birds, and skies,
 And scented flower's bloom,
Are all to me as one who lies
 Hid in a hollow tomb;
Where murmurs of a busy world,
 Sift through the creviced stone,
And like a leaf but half unfurled,
 Leaves all the tale unknown.

Round every life an Eden lies,
 In golden glow of youth,
When romance tints with tender dyes,
 The solemn page of truth,
When newer being thrills the heart,
 To young love's magic hand,
And, as awake from dreams, we start
 To gaze on fairy land.

What deeper blue the skies assume,
What tints the earth takes on,
What roseate hues our paths illumine,
A moment, then 't is gone.
And back to earth we turn again;
Back to its weary strife,
Yet, through all sorrow, sin, and pain,
One vision sweetens life.

The Little Shoe.

THE sweetest little girl that ever lived
Is chatting gayly by my easy chair,
Adown her shapely head like sunlight sieved
Through evening shadows falls her golden hair ;
Her fairy form is leaning on my knee,
Her earnest eyes are gazing up to mine,
With what a faith she all believes in me,
That child-like faith our Savior called divine.

The pain her présence brings she can not dream,
Reviving sorrow long since worn dry,
From out a channel of a storm born stream,
That tore my aching heart in years gone by ;
Her silvery voice recalls the voice of one,
Long passed through death, unto the dread unknown
When my ewe-lamb, my one, with life was done,
And, left me childless, homeless and alone.

In yonder drawer there lies a little shoe,
Tear stained and faded, in its wraps apart,
All scuffed out and torn to tawny hue—
It patters yet upon my aching heart.
Frail relic thus to hold so grave a trust,
And bridge with grief the many weary years
The little form's long molded into dust,
I see it only through my blinding tears.

Along these halls there sound no pattering feet,
No eager face peers through the door ajar,
No joyous shout my comings ring to greet,
No busy fingers my sad labors mar.
One little death has made my house a tomb,
One cruel stroke has forced my life apart
From all its healthful growth, and it was doomed
To fruitage of a mutilated heart.

We pity the deformed, the crippled find
Of human charity a helpful store,
But take no thought of hurts that blind
And half destroy our being at its core.
Back to thy hiding-place, dear little shoe,
Back with thy memories of saddened years;
You give to dreary life a softer hue,
And, after all, a blessing in these tears.

Serenade.

WHILE bright stars are keeping,
 Their watch in the sky,
And song-birds are sleeping
 To Summer's low sigh,
I leave the lone pillow
 My weary head prest,
And steal to the lattice
 Of her I love best.

Breathe low, gentle music,
 Steal into her dream
Like the sweet voice of flowers
 That whispers the stream ;
I would not recall her
 From dreamland of bliss,
Even in music,
 To troubles of this.

As white as the snow-flake,
 As warm as the sun,
As soft as the moss rose
 The South breathes upon ;
Sleep holds her enchanted
 In dreamy repose,
As odors of evening
 In clasp of the rose.

Oh, long night of sorrow,
 Of heartache and sighs,
Without the bright morrow
 That sleeps in her eyes !
What gulf lies between us,
 From goodness to sin,
From the passion without
 To the heaven within !

Monody.

I weep for Adonis—he is dead !—*Shelley.*

POLAND is dead ! We weep for Poland,
High old bishop of the mountains green ;
Brass-buttoned, swallowed-tailed, in no land
Will the venerable pump, lofty and serene,
Any more be seen.
It seemeth now a dream
That erst he stood among the solons solemn,
Gray-haired, erect, a very column
Of pious sweetness, playing with his fob
Where hung the ancient seal,
While spreading softly o'er each dirty job
The unctious cover of his righteous zeal.
The great investigator is at rest,
In the final home by Christian statesmen blest,
Where ghostly shadows stalk the silent shore,
Where smiling Schuyler smiles no more,

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And Pomeroy, Harlan, Hooper and the rest
Have journeyed o'er.

Last of the Christain statesmen, over thee
We drop our several tears.
The lobby's hung in black, and lo ! we see
The weeping carpet-baggers pale with fears,
And huge contractors and petticoated dears,
Forming the long procession, and loud they cry
Along the vaulted sky :

“Our mighty Poland's dead ;
Our Bishop's dead ;
Old Subsidy is dead ;
The dearest sort of dead ;
Let tears be shed.

For no perq's can raise him from his lowly bed.
We are forlorn ;
We see the crib and can not get the corn.”

The White House seems a whited sepulcher—
There is no stir
Along its lofty rooms, but sounds
Of wailing reach us from camp-meeting grounds,
When the dread Cæsar prays. . .
He seeks at last to leave the crooked ways,

Startled by Poland's fate and shortened days;
Forsaking all fast things, he fasts always.

Hearken now to Dana—Dana of the *Sun*.

The sun that shines for all;

He singeth a madrigal;

For that his enemy is dead and done,

Who, with ye Harrington

And other villians, to the Capital

Him would have dragged

In grievous irons bound,

Likewise well gagged.

Now hearken to the joyful sound:

Great Dana lately in a funk,

Drinketh much lager and forthwith getteth drunk.

Hear the sainted Mormons loud rejoice

In tones polygamous,

Lifting a solemn voice

To thank the Lord for thus

Destroying the great Goliath of the House,

Who sought to rob them of their many wives,

Likewise their lands and mines and teeming hives,

That carpet-baggers might carouse

On gains ill-gotten—the thieving crew—

That God will yet gridiron for his favored nation.

To this old Brigham had a special revelation,

For he foretold our Poland dead,
And heard the solemn tolling of a bell
That said old Poland's gone to hell,
And Satan's breaking bark upon his legislative head.

Now hear the fearful chimes,
Newman's iron rhymes,
How they ring and roar and swell,
Ding dong bell,
Making each listener hold his aching head,
Wishing old Poland damned as well as dead.

No more, no more, oh ! never more may we
Count up our little perq's, nor ever see
The sweet subsidy
Blessed by Poland for poor humanity.
A pall hangs over Willard's, the Ebbitt's done,
And gloom has settled on the Arlington ;
In Welcker's fascinating rooms the lights burn blue,
Crape hangs on knobs south of the avenue ;
From sample-rooms the joyous laugh has fled,
Hertzog a mammoth tear has shed,
For Poland dead.

Song.

To—.

AS rivulets to the river run,
The rivers to the sea,
'Neath starry skies, or cloudless sun,
To where their rest may be,
My heart's deep love, oh, dearest one,
Forever flows to thee.

Nor birds, nor flowers, nor bending trees
The restless waves may stay,
Nor shining stars nor wooing breeze
Win e'en a brief delay;
They murmur of the distant seas,
And murmuring flow away.

I want the words to sing, my love,
Of love's sweet ecstasy,
Resistless as the rivers, love,
And boundless as the sea,
That cares not for the heaven above
If heaven holds not thee.

After the Ball.

I CARE not for these stars of earth,
Though ever lovely things,
Unless, dear girl, they gather worth
From what wild fancy brings.
'Tis thus, oh, Lucy! with the wreath
That late you gave to me,
For ever since it seems to breathe
Not of itself, but thee.

I look on it and see again,
Beneath the chandelier,
Where fell in waves the witching strain
Of music on the ear,
Thy lovely form that seemed to rise
As from a foamy sea,
The goddess of my heart held eyes
Born of the melody.

I joined you in the whirling dance,
 I clasped your fairy form ;
I drank in madness from the glance
 That lost its look of scorn.
I had one glimpse for life to sigh
 From out those lustrous eyes,
As one who lingers longing by
 The gates of Paradise.

'T was seen—'t was gone ; I stood alone
 Amid the merry throng ;
The lightning's flash had o'er me shone,
 Then darkness swept along,
The music lost its tone or mirth,
 And seemed a funeral strain,
That marched me back to weary earth,
 To weary self again.

And once again we met—'t was brief ;
 My heart with envy stirs,
To dream upon thy form beneath
 The cloak of silks and furs.
I said, Good night ; your papa said,
 " The carriage waits, my dear,"
When softly from your lovely head
 This wreath you dropped me near.

After the Ball.

The night is passing, and its sheen
Of stars melt in the morn ;
I sit alone to drink and dream
So weary and forlorn ;
For now we go our various ways—
While mine is cold and drear,
For you, as papa fondly says,
The carriage waits, my dear.

In Memoriam—B. M. P.

SO brave and true through all the troubled past,
Guiding his life on honor's highest plane,
Strong in his guard 'gainst selfish greed of gain;
So sad and tragic to break down at last!
He stood so calm 'mid sulphurous smoke of death,
Worked on in patience 'neath privation's sway,
Found wealth in love, with ne'er a hasty breath
To mar with strife life's saddest, darkest day;
We thought him strong, nor took account of pain,
That wrecked his trusting nature as it fell;
The silver cord was broken in the strain,
The golden pitcher shattered at the well.
Poor Ben! grief builds for thee a purer fame,
So sleep in peace beneath thy honored name.

Melinda's Trail.

"Whereby hangs a tale, sir? Marry, sir."

Othello.

"Mistress, you must tell us another tale."

Twelfth Night.

SHE walks upon the avenue,
This female friend of mine,
With figure that is exquisite,
And face that is divine,
And dresses in the latest style,
That develops much behind.

The hair upon her philo
Is heaped up like a stack,
The pannier on her n. w. side
Looks like a camel's back ;
Her trail upon the dirty street
A comet in its track.

This trail is made of satin
Or silk, as may be seen,
And cost her verdant father
No end of backs called green,
And for the sweeping of the street
Is a rather high machine.

The fashion comes from Europe,
Where 't is called a carriage dress ;
But Melinda has no carriage
Her little soul to bless,
So the filthy bricks and asphalt
Get a satiny caress.

Now as Melinda sweeps along
The sunny avenue
She looks so pure and innocent
In every line and hue,
She seems an angel in disguise
Dropped from the very blue.

But when this lovely creature seeks
At home her night's repose,
And doff's her carriage garment, Lord
What facts she can disclose
In the horrible condition
Of her hidden underclothes.

Melinda's Trail.

Her balbriggins, that's Irish now
For a better style of hose,
Have dust and dirt and oder too,
Enough to turn one's nose,
While her petticoats, etc.,
A board of health would pose.

There's miasma in Melinda,
This creature soft and frail;
She gets it on the avenue
And holds it at retail;
But what a tale she can unfold
In unfolding of her trail.

'Tis said on one occasion she
Turned out many a quid,
Some very dirty paper and
An old tobacco lid,
A defunct frog and something worse
That in the folds were hid.

Now if you meet Melinda sweet
In all her glittering show,
And feel a soft emotion where
The heart throbs come and go,
The cure is to remember well
Her fearful fix below.

Ariel.

I LONGED to see thee, sweet unseen,
I longed to hear thee, sweet unheard,
Before the ideal of my dream,
My heart within was strangely stirred;
As if thy soul, unseen, all seeing,
Had touched the inner cord of being.

I stood as on that magic isle,
Where clouds hung heavy in the sky,
And rocks and trees were still the while,
The troubled waters tumbled by,
Wrathful at winds no longer near,
So fair and grand, and yet so drear.

'T was then thy music seemed to sweep
Along the pure and storm-seived air—
“Thy hopes are buried in the deep,
Full fathom five; in death so fair,
They sleep, they sleep, while o'er them leap
The surging waves that requiem keep.”

The rocks looked on the cloudy sky,
The sky looked on the rolling sea,
O'er sands and waves the weary eye
No sign of human life could see;
And after pause the sweet refrain
Stole like a dirge upon the brain.

Oh! world of waters wide and deep,
Oh! lovely isle that mocked my dole,
Oh! music wild and weird and sweet,
That brought such solace to my soul.
My hopes were buried; would they change
Swift into something rich and strange?

The fairest barks go down at sea,
The saddest hearts mourn on the shore,
A dirge is all our melody,
No more, no more, oh! never more!
Then mock us not with hope of change
Into that something sweet and strange.

They all have melted into air,
The sea and isle and song have fled,
I sit with my companion, Care,
With heavy heart and weary head;
And yet I thank thee for the strain
That woke to life the dream again.

New Words to a Choice Old Song.

I KNEW a man once built his house
Upon an icy plain,
And thought, poor man, his house would stand,
Throughout the summer's rain.

That man he was a wondrous fool ;
A greater fool is he
Who puts his trust in woman's love
And lauds her constancy.

I knew a man once take his hound
His better friend to be,
And in his ears his hopes and fears
He poured incessantly.

That man he was a wondrous fool ;
A greater fool is he
Who feels a lack for women's clack ;
And lauds their brilliancy.

Then let us clink and drain our drink
To women, wit and wine,
Things very good when understood,
But not at all divine.

For he who drinks till he gets drunk
Has little wit, I ween,
But less has he whom love makes see
His wench a very queen.

One More Unfortunate.

O H! tell me, am I dying?
Can this indeed be death,
That weighs so heavy on my heart
And clutches at my breath?
Oh! tell me, am I dying?
Before I grow too weak
There are within my weary soul
Some words I fain would speak.

My name is not Belle Henry—
Ah! no, a dearer name
Was mine of early girlhood,
Before I brought it shame.
There is a lowly cottage,
Where peaceful waters flow,
Where wild birds by the window sing,
And gentle flowers blow;
I can not say it was my home,
It seems so long ago.

My mother, dearest mother,
 I see her strangely now,
Her sad, sad eyes and bending form,
 And care upon her brow.
I see my poor old father,
 Who had no word of blame,
Though upon his snow-white head
 I brought this burning shame.

I am dying, father, dying
 In this dreary place alone!
No hand to smooth my pillow,
 No heart ache for my moan!
Oh! well I now remember
 The snowy little bed,
Where mother came to bless me
 In prayers so softly said;
I see the apple blossoms,
 I hear the partridge call
In the dewy light of morning,
 Peace brooding over all.

I was fifteen, only fifteen,
 When the cruel tempter came;
I knew but how to love him,
 And he to bring me shame.

How my playmates all forsook me
 In the cold world's look of scorn,
When in shameful sense of horror
 My little babe was born.

Ah! brief the joy he brought me,
 For joy it was to me
To feel one cling so closely
 When all so hard could be.
But he faded from my clasping,
 I laid him down to rest,
His little hands soft folded
 Upon his little breast;
Shall I nevermore behold him,
 Ne'er clasp his form again,
After all these years of anguish,
 And all this life of pain?

I fled one dreary midnight;
 Indeed I could not bear
My father's silent sorrow,
 My mother's look of care;
And lower still and lower
 Passed on my weary feet,
Until I stood an outcast
 Upon the darkling street.

Oh! sickness, cold, and hunger,
Oh! degradation's ban!
Ye are soft and kinder-hearted
Than heart of cruel man.

My father oft has read us,
While I knelt beside his knee,
Of the woman and the Savior—
No Savior came to me;
But scorn and bitter curses,
And wrongs I may not tell,
From they whose blighting shadows
Upon my pathway fell.

Oh! father, dearest father,
Oh! mother, far away,
You mourn your long-lost outcast—
I am twenty-one to-day—
Oh! would that I were with you!
To have you near me now
Would take this pain from out my heart,
This anguish from my brow;
You would not spurn your darling,
But clasp the wasted form
Of the poor, weak, erring creature
The world can only scorn.

My prayer is not unanswered,
I feel a spirit sweet
Steal o'er my soul, and ease my heart—
I pray you let me sleep.

A Pathetic Ballad of Chicago.

With the accent heavy on the "go."

I SING a breach of promise
That happened long ago,
Where the waters of the river
Like roses seem to flow,
Where Amanda Graig was trifled with,
In the town of Chicago.

There was an ancient duffer
As rich as rich could be,
Who loved the fair Amanda,
"The inexpressive she,"
And he "loved her as his Jesus,"
And he spelled it with a "G."

Amanda was no chicken,
 Though tender as a doe ;
She lived in Cincinnati,
 Where the market is but slow ;
So she listened to this duffer
 Of the wicked Chicago.

His love it was so burning,
 It cooked him on the raw ;
And so to cool his passion
 He went to Saginaw,
And wrote her sundry letters,
 Ne'er dreaming of the law.

The tender maid, Amanda,
 Had taught in common school ;
So kept these loving letters
 A-written by this fool
Who sought in breezy Saginaw
 His burning love to cool.

Now, this illiterate villain
 Remained in Saginaw,
Until his burning passion
 Was cool as any slaw ;
And then he went to buying lots
 And Amanda went to law.

A Pathetic Ballad of Chicago.

Oh! blessed dispensation,
The wicked one to tease,
That cures up our affection
And brings the heart its ease;
Some find it sweet in heaven,
Some in the Common Pleas.

What did this cunning cheese-wax
But shave his ancient pate;
Put on old clothes and bend his form,
Take out the dentist plate,
And wrinkle up his countenance,
Great pity to create?

But the jury were all fathers,
And some were husbands, too;
And the tricks of this deceiver
They saw right through and through;
So they found a hundred thousand
To make the cuss look blue.

So all ye ancient lovers,
A-roving to and fro,
Now take from me a warning—
Do n't let your passion flow,
Or, if you breach a promise,
Steer clear of Chicago.

Ye Granger is Poking Round.

AIR: "The little pigs lay with their tails curled up."

THE little pigs lay with their tails curled tight,
Tight, tight, tight;
The little pigs lay with their tails curled tight,
A-snoring so sweet in the cloudy night,
When they all got up in terrible fright,
Plight, fright, plight,
For ye Granger was looking round.

These little pigs numbered just fifty-two,
Two, two, two;
These little pigs numbered just fifty-two;
They had very long tails, but ears were few,
For their ears were gone to make a stew,
Stew, stew, stew,
As ye Granger went poking round.

There were Kelley and Dawes and fifty more,
More, more, more ;

There were Kelley and Dawes and fifty more,
That lay very low and let on to snore
In innocent sleep, while the terrible bore,
Bore, bore, bore,

Of ye Granger went searching round.

“My pigs were marked by Uncle Sam,”
Quoth ye Granger with a terrible damn ;
“I want them all for shoulder and ham,
Ham, ham, ham,”

Quoth ye Granger while poking round.

“Their bowels are good for sausage, too,
Too, too, too ;

Their bowels are good for sausage, too ;
Their little feet make an excellent stew.

We will have sides and heads a few,
Few, few, few,”

Quoth ye Granger a-poking round.

“We are no pigs,” squealed Kelley and Dawes,
Dawes, Dawes, Dawes,

“We are no pigs,” squealed Kelley and Dawes ;

“We are good men who make good laws,
And fight the fight of the negro cause,

Cause, cause, cause,
But ye Granger went poking round.

The moral I give of this sweet little song,
 Song, song, song,
For all the pigs to the slaughter have gone ;
To be safe in the House as ye go it strong ;
Let your tails be short and your ears be long,
 Long, long, long,
For ye Granger is poking round.

Louise Kirby Piatt.

INSCRIPTION ON HER TOMB.

TO thy dear memory, darling, and my own,
I build in grief this monumental stone;
All that it tells of life in death is thine,
All that it means of death in life is mine;
For the dread King, who tore our lives apart,
Gave me the dead, to you the living part;
You, dying, live to find a life divine,
I, living, die till death hath made me thine.

To a Star.

A MID the somber pines the winds are sighing,
While nature drops her livery of green ;
About my home the maple leaves are dying,
Ah me ! what spaces lie our lives between.

Through all the hazy autumn hours I wander,
Dreaming upon the mysteries of life ;
With ear against the world's great heart you ponder
In pain upon its glory and its strife.

And when night comes, with clear unequaled splendor,
I see the star-king from Eastern shadows start ;
Far in the West shines one less bright, more tender—
With even pace they keep their ways apart.

One sinks, the other rises, and there lies on
A separate fate ; for one, alas ! forlorn,
Sinks slowly 'neath the murky, low horizon,
While melts the other softly into morn.

A Memory.

ON Narragansett's storm-beat sand
We walked with slow, reluctant feet;
I held enclasped her slender hand,
With loved possession, deep and sweet.
Out on the wave the wild foam swung,
The circling sea-gulls upward sprung;
While o'er the level sand the sea
Came rolling soft and dreamily.

The sunset's glow was on her cheek,
Where love and heaven seemed to blend;
So full our hearts we could not speak,
As summer's glories found an end.
What tender lights seived through the mist,
As waves and sunlight sparkling kissed,
While o'er the sea, to setting sun,
Swung thunder of the evening gun!

Ah ! gentle form, what gift was thine
 To make the sky a deeper blue,
To make the barren sands divine,
 And heaving sea a rosier hue ?
'T was morn of life, and love's sweet glance
Gave dreary years their one romance,
When yielding form and tender eyes,
Return to earth its paradise.

On Narragansett's dreary sand,
 Now bent and old, alone I stray,
Nor see the lights, nor waves, nor land,
 But one lone grave so far away.
The storm-tossed foam and gulls distraught—
Return like dreams, with haunted thought—
“No more, no more, oh ! never more !”
Moan the dark waves along the shore.

Death of Custer.

BE hearty, my braves, for the hour draws nigh,
When, in white man's blood, we wet our knives;
The light shall not dawn in the eastern sky
Ere we torture the men and scalp their wives.
There's plunder on hand and wampum in store;
We're deadly as lightning, and still as the night;
Your chief is here, and leads you once more:
The hero am I of a hundred fights.

The long haired chief, like a hunting hound,
Followed our trail with his eagle eye;
The Indian sought and the Indian found:
He came to kill, and remained to die.
As a roaring wind he lead on his braves;
As snakes so still we awaited here;
They sought our scalps, they found their graves,
They fought without hope, they fell without fear.

In a circle of fire we hemmed them 'round,
His braves fell in heaps, but never he quailed ;
Firm as a rock he held to his ground,
Though the succor he sought in terror failed ;
They left him to die, as he lived, alone,
Proud, fierce, and fleet, as a hawk on high.
His life was his country's, his deeds all his own,
He knew how to live, as he knew how to die.

The Cowboy.

MY name it is Buck Stockton,
It is a sound to fear ;
The Ingun and the Greaser start,
That dreaded name to hear ;
For my finger 's on my trigger,
And my hand is on my knife,
And when Buck Stockton 's challenged,
He answers with a life.

I came from old Kentucky,
Was born one blessed night
Next a bar-room when a fight went on ;
So I was born to fight.
The plains are my possessions,
My saddle is my home,
And it 's death to any human
Who says that I can't roam.

My hoss is young Red Thomas—

A blue grass hoss is he ;

His sire won the Derby,

And he can win for me.

He makes a mile a minit,

And he makes it every day ;

A flash, a shot, a death yell,

And we are far away.

The border's full of hell-hounds,

There's death at every turn ;

Who's right, who's wrong, who lives, who dies,

Is never my concern.

My hoss and my revolver

Make my commission still,

To keep the peace for Stockton,

To keep the peace or kill.

King Midas's Touch.

KING Midas was a wondrous king,
His like we'll ne'er behold;
For what his kingship deigned to touch
At once was turned to gold.
But ah! the days are changed, I trow,
Since those of that old king;
For touch a man with gold and now
He'll turn to any thing.

The magi of the East, they say,
Possessed a magic ring,
That gave, when touched, all human sway,
And every pleasant thing.
The lobby at the Capital
Has a better thing in store:
Can see the magi's magic ring
And go them forty more.

King Midas's Touch.

There's not a statesman in the land,
 Whate'er may be his swing,
But knuckles to the dark command,
 He's slave unto the ring.
He looks the eagle, soaring grand,
 But, like a common kite,
He's made of old newspapers, and
 A string controls his flight.

The Kickers.

THERE was an ancient millionaire,
Who was both old and green,
Who loved a girl, with golden hair,
A girl of sweet sixteen ;
When wed, alas ! the war began,
That drove the groom to liquor,
For the little wife had lovers, and
This good man died a kicker.

There was a mighty Senatair,
A boss both strong and high,
Who wore a lock of curly hair,
That took the pop'lar eye ;
One day he did resign in spleen,
And then began to bicker,
But now among the herd he's seen,
A most uncommon kicker.

We know a great divine, who, dear
 To the commercial mind,
Drew crowds immense, each day, to hear
 His theologic find ;
Alas! he once stepped down and out
 With Satan for a dicker,
Since then he sadly goes about,
 A discontented kicker.

So life has many a crown and cross
 Full many a joy and sorrow,
And if to-day you feel a loss,
 You'll find success to-morrow ;
But whether it be joy or woe,
 Or, be it slow or quicker,
Never among the people go,
 And show yourself a kicker.

We may not Meet Again.

WE may not meet again,
For earth has many ways,
And lips in other lands,
Are ringing in thy praise.

But memory o'er me lies,
As a mantle in my sleep;
And olden hopes will rise,
Like spirits from the deep.

We may not meet again,
As once we fondly met;
All hope of that were vain,
But vainer to forget.

For not a flower that flings,
Its fragrance on the lea,
Or not a bird that sings,
But breathes, lost one, for thee.

We may not Meet Again.

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We may not meet again,
But from around my heart,
The light of other days,
Alas, will not depart ;

But like some lonely star,
That lights the deep, blue sea,
Thy beauty shines upon
The wave of memory.

A Judicial Character.

SEE where our pig-eyed pettifogger sits,
A man by court'sy and a Judge by fits ;
How like an owl, upon the bench he blinks,
Striving in vain to make us think he thinks.
On legal points to shock our virile sense
He fumbles vainly in his impotence ;
So steeped in sin, yet innocent of law,
He deals out judgment like a tailed Beshaw.
In Goldsmith's time there once a wonder grew
How one small head could carry all it knew ;
But here 't is changed, we now a wonder find
To see much carcass with so little mind.
Clad in a pious garb, to church he hies,
And in the presence of his Maker lies.
Mean hypocrite and meaner demagogue,
He holds combined the worst of cat and hog ;
Coarse as the one and as the other sly,
He walks the earth—an animated lie ;
But, when he rides, great Scott ! what lies
His horse and carriage forthwith advertise ;
A home-stead judgment is the steed he drives.

Morning Prayer.

TO Thee, great God, I humbly pray
For grace and light and will and power
To do each hour of every day
That 't is Thy will on earth to stay,
The duties of the day and hour.

I know not, Lord—Thou knowest all,
When I shall pass through death's dark river,
And what to me shall then befall;
Weak, ignorant, and blind, I call
To Thee, of all good gifts the giver.

That Thou, my Father, just and true,
When death all ties to earth shall sever,
Thou who hast led me hitherto,
With joys and blessings ever new,
Will be my trust and hope forever.

To Die Alone.

TO live in crowds, yet doomed to die alone;
What sudden sev'rance in the fateful call,
When the scared face is turned unto the wall
To deal with death. No agonized caress nor moan
Can aught avail. The feeble hands unclasp;
Forth from the windings of our sunlit shore
Alone the soul departs forevermore,
And echoless in space our cries are cast.
The birds sing on, the tender flowers bloom,
While fading memory finds in time a calm;
Dust gathers slowly on the sculptured tomb,
And cold oblivion holds its healing balm.
If loved and lost, ah, me! live yet to bless.
Why this relief in dull forgetfulness?

Change.

One after one we see our friends depart,
As stars of midnight melt unto the morn;
From sweetest dreams awakes the weary heart,
To throb, like Ruth's, "amid the alien corn,"
When, sick for home, she sighed, so dreary and forlorn.
Yet not of thee I grieve, Oh! mighty Death—
Thy ways are pleasant ways, thy paths are peace,
As flowers will fall in Autumn's quiet breath,
At thy still coming, all our troubles cease—
But of the death called Change—the living death,
That mocks us with a semblance falsely shown,
The ghost of what it was without the breath
That animates the soul, the altered tone
And cold, averted look that leaves us so alone.

Tecumseh.

HE lived as lives the warrior,
In heavy stream of fight,
He died as dies the chieftain
Ere came the cry of flight;
He closed his eyes forever
On his nation's endless night.

No marble gleams above him,
No people for him weeps;
The tears are dews of autumn,
The sighs the wind that sweeps
Above the lone cell narrow,
Where the deathless hero sleeps.

Ah! vain the brave endeavor,
Ah! vain the earnest cry,
The many sleep on ever,
The few march out to die,
While finds heroic failure
Its record in a sigh.

Oh, Sing no More.

O H! sing no more that song so glad,
Wake not its melody,
For now, alas, the strain is sad
That once was sweet to me ;
For she whose tender loving hands
First smote its magic chord
In heaven amid the sinless stands
To sing before her Lord.

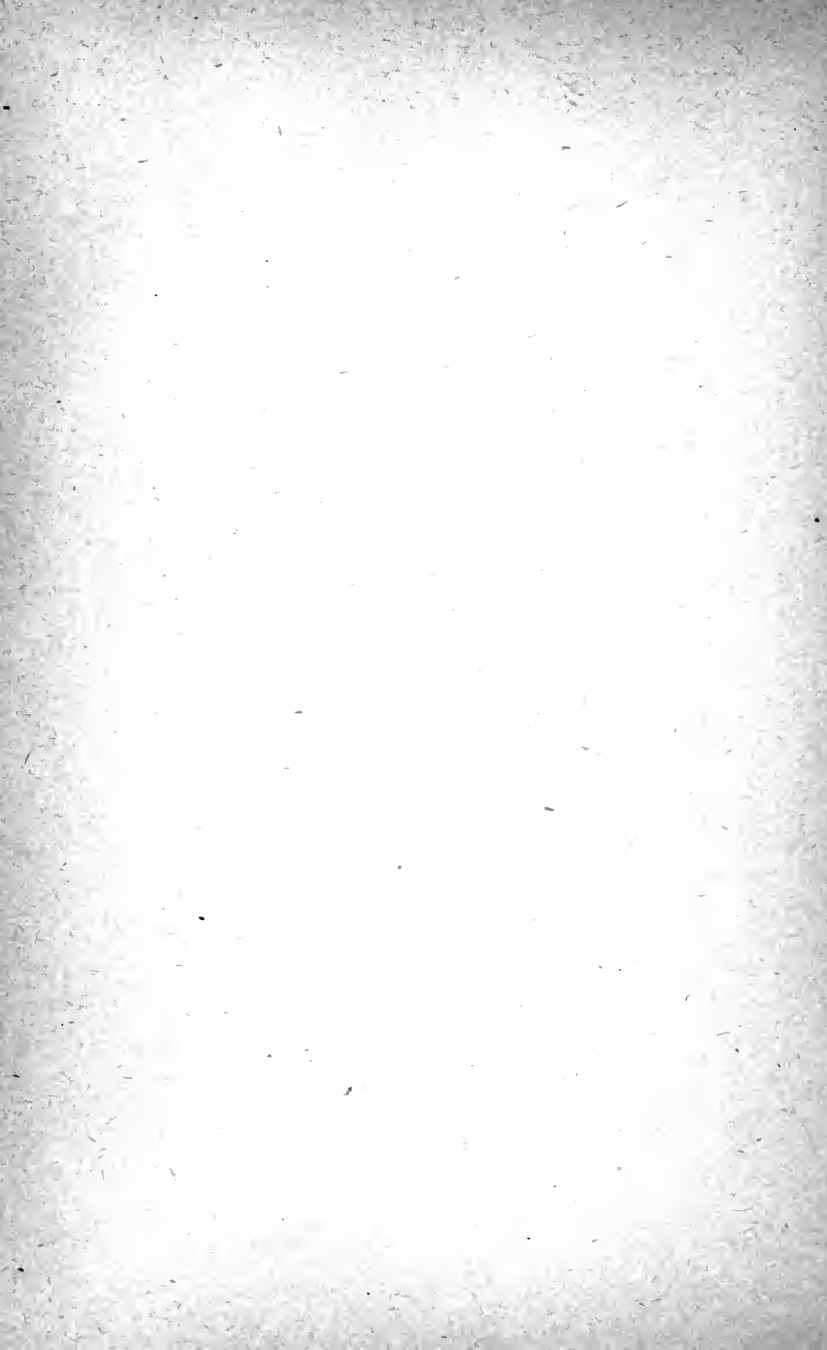
Ah! bitter tears of vanished years,
Ah! heart benumbed by pain,
How quickening anguish reappears
To live along that strain;
The dull, dead longing comes apace,
That years in death has lain,
To look upon that loving face
I ne'er may see again.

Oh, Sing no More.

Forgive me, love, if my weak plaint
A shadow o'er thee shed;
Ah! more than wife, nor less than saint,
We mourn our common dead.
The sweet romance of sunny birth
Has faded from my brow,
For that which was but love on earth
Is our religion now.

Death.

WHY should I shrink from thy dark presence, Death,
So near me now when fleeting years are brief;
Soon thy chill touch shall be my sole relief
From racking pains, dimmed eyes and gasping breath.
To die from earth and never feel agen
The kiss of love nor kindly grasp of men
I would not fear if from those fleshless lips
Aught I could learn of that dim life to come;
Yet light in night has but a hushed eclipse,
The grave is silent and its master dumb.
Startled I gaze into the starlit sky,
When God recedes from thought in boundless space,
And faith grows faint in His redeeming grace—
Oh, Holy Mother! hear my helpless cry!



LOST AND WON.

CHARACTERS OF PLAY.

HON. HAMILTON BARR, Virginia gentleman.

YOUNGER BARR, his son.

CAPTAIN, after, COLONEL, LACY, U. S. Army of Volunteers.

AMOS ADZE, private, after, cabinet maker.

BUCKTHORN, overseer, after, detective.

OLD SCHACK, colored house servant.

OLD JEFF, colored "Prophet of de Lawd."

LORD TOMNODDY, English attraction.

FITZPOODLE, American attraction.

SERGEANT BANG, servant to Lacy.

BESSIE BARR, daughter of Hamilton Barr.

AUNT HESTER BARR, sister of Hamilton Barr.

HELEN DASH, after, MRS. COL. LACY.

Slaves, soldiers, ladies and gentlemen, police, and creditors.

PROLOGUE.

SCENE: On the James. Distant view of river and mountains beyond. To the right an old family tomb with "Barr" above the entrance. Time, sunset. As the sun goes down camp fires appear on mountains, and through entire scene distant roar of artillery heard.

Curtain discovers old Schack, Jeff, and slaves, men and women, looking off toward mountains.

First Slave. Dye's comin', shu enuff. An' de Lawd knows dye's thousands and thousands ob 'em.

Second Slave. An' dey's got big guns, too. Jis you listen. Aint it awful?

First Slave. Dey'l hab use foh 'em. Young Mass' Barr say dat one Souvner is good foh tree dem Yankees.

Second Slave. Oh, shaw, dat's talk. Aint dey come, and do n't they keep a' coming? Where's yer Souvner as keep 'em back? You talks foolishness wid yer young Mass' Barr.

First Slave. Don't know. Hope's its foolishness. When Yanks come, de nigger go. Mind dat. He draps de hoe handle like a hot poker, an' has his freedom on de spot. De Lawd knows I want dem Yankees. But I'se afraid, I is.

Second Slave. The Lawd's on dar side, and when de Lawd takes side, as ole Mass' Barr says, dar's a majority. I stand by de Lawd and de Yanks, I do.

Schack. An' I's ashamed ob you. You here 'uns has been a eating' of Massa's bread and wearin' de Massa's clos, you sleeps under de roof he gibs you, an' when you's sick, he doctors you, and when you dies he buries you.

Second Slave. An' when we do n't work he whips us, an' when he wants de money, he sells us to de plantations down Souf.

Schack. Shut you lyin' mouf. Dar aint bin a darkey sole off dis place for a hundred year.

Second Slave. Dat's so. Ole Mass' Barr mity good, but you jis wait till young Mass' Barr comes in, honey; den you look out. Dey do say ole Mass' Barr done sole us aready.

Schack. Dey says lies, you ornary nigger. Ole Mass' Barr neber do sick thing. He's mity kind to his niggers.

Second Slave. Yas, an' he lets dat oberseer, Buckthorn, work us, and Mass' Buckthorn mighty handy wid de whip.

Schack. 'Cause yer so ornary. Look at Mass' Harris' niggers. Dey do moh work in a day dan you git off in a mounf. It jes makes me sick, it does. You 'uns got no t'anks in ye.

Second Slave. Dat's all high talk in ye, ole Shack. You'se a house nigger. You's got de best ob everyting. You wears de best ob clos; you eats ob de fat ob de lan'. We 'uns, field niggers, hab de rags, de con pone, an' de lash. Oh, you go 'long. I'se foh de Yanks, all de time.

Schack. Heah him, heah him. Oh, you ornary cuss. De Mass' ought to take dat out you black hide wid de whip.

Second Slave. Got to cotch me fust. Onct de nigger went to de Norf; now de Norf comes to de nigger. Onct de nigger run; now de Massa run. Yes, sah, dat's de fact.

Schack. Dis talk is disgustin'. You poh debil, you

do n't know what you talk 'bout. You wants to leab your kind massa an' your warm home for de cold Norf, yer does, wha' de snow an' ice makes nigger ob no 'count. I'se bin in de Bah family—de richest an' grandist family in all Virginy—man an' boy, nigh onto seventy year, an' please de Lawd, I means to die under dar roof. Ef de wus' comes to de wus', I shahed dar prosperity an' I'll shah dar troubles.

Second Slave. Aint much left to shah, Schack, wid 'em. You's ole, Schack.

Schack. Yes, I'se ole, an' I'se grown ole in dar service. Mass' Barr an' me played togedder as chilern. My mudder was his mammy, an' I'se too ole to turn ornary and bite de han' dat git me bread. I's sick ob you, you poh trash.

Second Slave. Dem hard words don't hurt. Thar's ole Doctah Jeff. Stan' back, niggers, ole Jeff sees de Lawd. (*OLD JEFF comes solemnly forward and gazes off.*) Jis ye look at him. Get yer eye on de colored prophet ob de Lawd. What is it, Jeff?

Jeff. (*After a roar of artillery in the distance.*) It's de Lawd proclaiming freedom to de oppressed on de mountains an' in de valleys. He says in thunder: "No moh chains and whips foh his chilern." De poh slave fled from de oppressor. He followed de norf star by night an' hid in the swamps by day; now de norf star comes to

de poh slave in de day time, and de thunder ob de Lawd
says: "Bewah!" (*Artillery as before.*) (*Sings*):

Dah 's light upon de mountains—
Sing, Oh, de Jubalee;
'T is de coming ob de Savior
To set de darkey free.
He takes burden from de sholdah
An' de shackles from de han';
Dah 's light upon de mountains
An' freedom in de lan'.

Chorus—Sing, Oh, sing de Jubilee.
Oh, hurry up good Savior and set
de darkey free.

(*Union soldiers in the distance sing a verse from John
Brown.*)

(*JEFF sings*):

Oh, harken to de voices
A 'ringing in de a'.
'T is de comin' ob our Moses,
An' he tells 'em to bewah.
We has waited long in sorrow,
We 's toilin' in de night;
But do n't you see de morrow
A breakin' into light?

(*Chorus as before, answered by Union soldiers. After, a
negro dance.*)

Enter BUCKTHORN, *cracking a whip.*

Buckthorn. You black devils, stop this racket. Slope,
I say. (*Cutting among them.*) The Yanks may set you

free; but, until they do, I'm master here. Get to your quarters, you lazy snakes.

Old Jeff. But, Massa Buckthorn—

Buckthorn. Not another word, or I'll break your damned infernal jaw. Off, I say. (*Drives them off with whip. Looks off.*) The Yanks have covered the river in spite of Colonel Randolph's guns. They'll soon be here, and then good-bye Barr Hall and my pleasant business of whaling niggers. I wonder what the old man is about; been busy as the devil all night with that English agent and his lawyer. Thought at first 'twas the police after me, and so I watched. Saw the Bull give the old man a pile that he handled as if it was very precious. What is he up to? Hello, here he's coming with his son and that pretty daughter. I'll watch a little longer. (*Steps behind tomb.*)

Enter HAMILTON BARR, BESSIE, and YOUNG BARR, the latter in new Confederate uniform.

Elder Barr. I have brought you here, my children, that you may be parties to and witnesses of a business of vital importance to us all. It can not be delayed. The Union army approaches, and you, my son, leave us to-night.

Young Barr. Yes, my father. I must hasten to report to my General and with the unpleasant news that

the Yankees have forced the passage of the river. They will soon be here. What will you and Bessie do, father?

Elder Barr. Remain quietly at home. I suppose the Federal General in command is a gentleman and will give us protection. But time presses and I have a matter of vital importance to communicate. This war, appealed to by the South, will end disastrously to the South.

Young Barr and Bessie. Oh, father!

Elder Barr. I know it is hard to say, but my head is not disturbed by prejudice nor passion. The South will hurl itself with frantic courage against the inevitable. It calls a wrong its right and attempts to fling back the civilization of a thousand years. Sustaining this wrong we have weakened in peace, while the North grew strong. We appeal to arms with an enemy we have fattened, while we lost strength, and in this war against civilization, humanity and brute force, the South will go down with nought left in memory of a lost cause but the high courage of a desperate one.

Young Barr. Why then should I go out to battle for a wrong and a defeat?

Elder Barr. Because you are a Virginian, and when in the clash of arms the Old Dominion calls to her sons, they can not pause to question right or wrong.

Young Barr. I can not believe the courage and de-

votion of such sons, in repelling an invasion of hired ruffians, will go for naught. God is with us.

Elder Barr. We have slept away our strength. My son, have you thought that the uniform you wear was manufactured in Massachusetts? Your pistols came from Connecticut. Your very boots were made in some New England village. The sword you are to wear, and be proud of, was wrought in New Jersey, and, Oh, my son, should you fall, your coffin itself, if you are so fortunate as to have one, will be from Pennsylvania. While we have slept in peace on our plantations, supported by a remnant of barbarism, called slavery, the world has swept by us, and now we waken in wrath to offer our naked breasts to inevitable ruin.

Young Barr. And we will make the march of the invaders a highway of human bones, and about every bier of a Southern soldier pile a monument of dead.

Elder Barr. Go, my son. To do your duty you have given bond in being a Barr and a Virginian. May Heaven protect you. Before we part let me say to you that, believing this cruel war will end in ruin to our side, I have converted all my property into money and English securities. It was my intent to go with sister to Europe with them, but the lines have closed in on us so suddenly that I can not hope to escape at present. But I have thought of a safe deposit where they can remain until

opportunity for removal offers. In this tomb of our fathers I will conceal this wealth. Should aught unfortunate occur to me, it is well you should know the place where it is to be found. (*Unlocks door of tomb; enters with YOUNG BARR and BESSIE. BUCKTHORN steals in and looks at them.*)

Buckthorn. So, so, hiding his money. I have it. I see my way out. Now for a Yank to help me move the deposits. (*Exit.*)

Re-enter from tomb ELDER and YOUNGER BARR and BESSIE.

Elder Barr. There, I feel relieved. We can now go our several ways in safety, for no one will think to disturb the dead, and, if so, the treasure will yet remain concealed. (*Enter AMOS ADZE, prepared for travel.*) What, Amos, you prepared to leave?

Amos. Yes, sir, with a heavy heart. The hour is on us when I must take sides in this awful conflict, or, like a coward, get beyond its hearing.

Young Barr. And, my adopted brother, you go with me to repel these invaders?

Amos. No, my brother. I have thought of all you urged, and the same motive that animates you influences me. You take up arms for your State, and the same duty calls me to mine in the cold North. I am, you know, a native of New England; I first drew breath in the moun-

tains of Vermont. They are all my kin. I am not native here.

Young Barr. Nor a true son by adoption! Your State is not invaded.

Amos. Pardon me. When Virginia strikes at the Union she invades Vermont. The flag we follow, that you would trail in the dust, is the flag given us by our fathers, and, like the broad heavens above, covers all the land.

Young Barr. Ingrate! Is this the return made us for the nurture and care given you from your childhood? A beggar, dependent on my father's bounty!

Bessie. Oh, Charles!

Elder Barr. For shame, my son! Recorded obligations cease to be gifts. The truly noble take no account of favors bestowed.

Young Barr. But this is life or death. The hired ruffians invade our soil, and seek over our bodies to desolate our homes, and an adopted son—

Elder Barr. Is not to be judged by us. There is a higher tribunal to which we must appeal. Let such judgment condemn, and condemn it will one side or the other.

Young Barr. I forgot your presence, sir, and ask your pardon.

Elder Barr. You forgot yourself. Under no circumstances can a true Virginian cease to be a gentleman. This lad is yet under our roof and shares our salt.

Young Barr. Your hand, Amos. We have not yet grasped the weapon that is to shed our blood. Forgive me.

Amos. With all my heart.

Young Barr. Come, sister, my sword.

Bessie. I will buckle it on. Oh, my brother, may Heaven send you safe again to us. (*Weeps*).

Young Barr. I go with all my heart, an officer to offer my life for a holy cause.

Amos. And I as a private to sustain the flag your fathers, as well as mine, gave us as a sacred trust.

Bessie. I have no sword for you, Amos.

Amos. I must win before I can wear one. Farewell. (*To elder Barr.*) I lack the words to fit the feelings of my heart for all you have done for the widow and orphan.

Elder Barr. I but did my duty, boy, no more. Go you to yours by such lights as to you seem best. Farewell, my sons. (*Exit YOUNG BARR to right; AMOS to left.*) A cruel war that sends thus into hostile ranks two brothers of one race, if not one blood! Come, my child, the old and the young, feeble alike, are left to suffer in their lonely homes, there to await the desolation that comes of death. (*Exeunt.*)

Enter BUCKTHORN, followed by CAPTAIN LACY.

Lacy. Come, now, my man. I go no further. What is it you have to communicate?

Buckthorn. No need to travel off this spot. See that old tomb?

Lacy. Quite plainly.

Buckthorn. The rebel who owns, or did own, all this part of the country, has turned his lands, niggers, and cotton into cash, and hid it there.

Lacy. You infernal scoundrel, would you have me rob the grave?

Buckthorn. Hard words, Captain, and a little inconsistent. You came out to kill and hesitate to plunder. You will leave a million to help on the rebellion.

Lacy. True enough. It is my duty to seize this wealth and turn it over to the government.

Buckthorn. Why, certainly. Seize first and turn it over afterward. I'll assist in this good work. (*Wrenches open door with bar, and both enter.*)

Enter HELEN.

Helen. What can my handsome Captain be doing in that old tomb? (*Looks in.*) He and another are digging. What can it mean? They come. (*Hides behind tomb.*)

Re-enter LACY and BUCKTHORN.

Buckthorn. Your troops approach. I must not be caught here. Farewell, most noble Captain. We will meet again when you have turned that million over to the

government. Don't fail in that, the government is so poor. (*Exit hurriedly, stooping as if to avoid observation.*)

Lacy. (*Looking at securities.*) A million, he said, and I hold it in my hand. May make it mine. The gathered accumulation of many toilsome lives, and mine by one easy act. I hold ease, power, luxury in my hand and am lifted from mean privation. Shall I? (*HELEN, unseen by him, touches his arm. He starts.*) Damnation! how you startled me!

Helen. A soldier, and afraid?

Lacy. What are you doing here?

Helen. I followed you to the camp; I followed you to the grave. There's devotion for you!

Lacy. Your following is a bore. I am being laughed at. I am weary of it. I shall make complaint and have you sent back through our lines.

Helen. No! you will not, my handsome Captain. When you return me through the lines, you turn that million over to the government. Make yourself mine and you make that million your own. It is my marriage portion.

Lacy. You tempt me to crime.

Helen. As you have tempted me. Turn about is fair play.

(*A roll of drums is heard, with roar of artillery. A bright light illumines the stage.*)

Lacy. The rebels burn their stores and are in full retreat. Our troopers advance. Come, girl. (*Exeunt.*)

The tramp of soldiers heard. A band plays the "Red, White, and Blue." Union forces march in upon the left, as a crowd of slaves, men, women, and children, rush in from the right and fall upon their knees. Tableau.

CURTAIN.

ACT I.

SCENE: Garden to a cottage. Hudson and Palisades seen in the distance. Cottage on the right and a few rustic seats and flowers. Old Schack discovered watering flowers.

Schack. Well, well, dis am a comin' down, shu 'nuff. De Bah family had a hundred niggers, chariots and coaches, wuk hosses and race hosses; 'bakker in Virginy, cotton at the Souf; a house of fifty rooms and barrels ob money. All come to lib in a mean house like dat an' amost dependin' on Schack for dar daily bread. Foh de Lawd, I doan know how long dis thing goin' to las', I doan. Dese heah creditors gittin' thicker an' thicker ebery day. Heah is de wus ob 'em all. He's de butcher's agent. Now, ole Schack, brace up. Dis a creditor, dat zasperates de cuss.

Enter SKINBILL.

Skinbill. I say, old powder-puff, where is the boss?

Schack. (*With dignity*). Who you designate as powdah puff? Who you terms boss, eh?

Skinbill. My eyes! Aint old Africa dignified? Why, he carries more dignity to the square inch than an obelisk.

Schack. An' you carries moh dam brass 'an ed make a copper kettle. You is one ob 'em poh debils as is hired to be disagreeable ca'se you is so ornary.

Skinbill. Well, I aint going to stand here all day swapping sass with a nigger. I want to see this old Virginia gent. Got to have the money or know why. There's the bill and if it aint paid before night, got to sue. We do n't furnish meat for poor old Virginia gentlemen to live on without paying for it, we do n't.

Schack. You do n't? Nobody 'specks you ebber did. I'd like to see how you lib.

Skinbill. I put up at the Brunswick, old coon. Just drop in and I will present you to Mrs. Skinbill and the little Skinbills, and we 'll have a champagne lunch. There comes another bill on legs.

Enter GROCER.

Grocer. I say, uncle, can't you do something for us to-day? Sorry to trouble you.

Schack. No trouble in de wor', sah. I was jus' makin' de necessary preparation foh dat, sah.

Skinbill. Hear him. For cool impudence and dignity

I'd back this old darkey against an alderman. Hello, here comes more of us. As Booth says, Come like shadows and so depart, without a shadow of settlement. (*Enter creditors.*) Welcome, gentlemen. Room for all. The more the merrier.

First Creditor. I want to see Mr. Barr, and I haint much time to lose, either.

Schack. Berry sorry, sah; berry sorry, sah, but Mas' Bah left on de early train foh de city on bizness ob great importance.

Second Creditor. Believe your lyin', old man. I was at the depot at the early train and I did n't see "Mass' Bah," as you call him.

Third Creditor. Well, I've been put off long enough. You have promised me every day now for a month, and making that bill bigger and bigger all the time.

First Creditor. Let's raid the house and smoke out the old gent. (*They make a move.*)

Schack. Genelmen! genelmen! Doan want to git you into any trubble, but doan you go ni dat house.

First Creditor. Why not?

Schack. Why, did n't heah de news? Did n't ye heah de awful calamity dat come on dat house?

Second Creditor. No, what is it? Old boss dead?

Schack. No, sah; no, sah; dat's not it. Its wus! Why, my younges' chile has taken down wid de small-pox.

I 'specs de amb'lance ebery minit. All de family has gone to de city.

Skinbill. Holy Moses! And I've been here breathin' this old rascal for ten minutes. I feel as if I was breakin' out this minute. (*Moving off.*)

First Creditor. Better get out of this! (*All move.*)

Schack. Doan be skarred; I'se had it afore, genelmen. Genelmen, I want dose bills. Anyway shake hands.

Second Creditor. Oh, go to the devil. (*All hurry off.*)

Schack. Yah, Yah, but dey is skarred. Well, well, dat angel Gabriel must be kept purty bizzy puttin' down my lies—an' all tole foh de ole massa.

Enter AMOS ADZE with lady's work-table.

Amos. Good morning, uncle Schack. How are the folks to-day?

Schack. Dey's purty well, Mr. Amos, purty well, considerin' I introduced de small-pox in de house dis mornin'.

Amos. What do you mean? Small-pox?

Schack. Yah, yah. I jis did. Now, Mr. Amos, I puts it to you, aint de small-pox a legal offense agin creditors? You can't take hot water to 'em; nor set de dog on 'em; nor shoot 'em wid a shot-gun, but you can say small-pox at 'em an' see 'em run. Yah! yah!

Amos. I see. Yes, I met them looking decidedly alarmed and one warned me to take care. But, uncle Schack, this will have unpleasant consequences. The Board of Health will be after you, and every one in the village will avoid you.

Schack. Oh, shaw! I jis tells it was a false 'larm. Dat it was only vary-lawd. You see?

Amos. But are you so pursued by creditors?

Schack. I is. But, bress your soul, I stand 'tween de family and dis gang and I does it so de family doan know. De ole massa and Miss Bessie 'd go destrackted if dey knew.

Amos. Poor old man, and has it come to this? And does he know nothing of these troubles?

Schack. Well, he has to know sometimes. You see, dar is a bill gits in in spite of me. An' den he talks about a 'mittance from Washington. I doan know what he means about dat sort ob property. I looks mity close 'bout his desk and in his clos' when I brush 'em, an' doan see no 'mittance about. I doan b'lieve, Amos, dat de ole man has a 'mittance. He rather gittin' loose about de head.

Amos. You mean a remittance, uncle Schack. He has that monthly, I know, but that wont go very far to-ward keeping a family. How do you manage, I can not make out?

Schack. Well, you see, Mr. Amos, de Lawd is good to the poh, and he has put our lines in among de chickens an' de eggs of rich enemies. I has n't lived in ole Virginny an' not know how to charm de chickens an' de eggs into the poh man's pot.

Amos. Good Lord, uncle Schack, you are not stealing chickens and eggs for the Barr family?

Schack. Mr. Amos, I'se a reasonin' like. I larned from de pulpit dat when de chilern of Isrel was driven from de house ob bondage dey done took wid 'em all de chickens an' de pots an' pans ob de 'pressor. An' de preacher, Mass' Beecher, tells us dat de Lawd approved of dem proceeduns.

Amos. (*Laughing.*) I hardly think the cases parallel.

Schack. Doan know 'bout de parrels, but dem Yanks cumd down in our lan' and jis gobbles up ebery ting. Why, bress you soul, honey, but de pigs, chickens an' de turkeys, dey go like snow afore de sun, and dey takes all Mass' Bah's money hid in de ole toomb, an' we can't 'talliate.

Amos. All very well to your mind, uncle Schack, but you better not let Mr. Barr know.

Schack. Lor' look-ye-heah! I want born dis mornin'! But I say, Mass' Amos, could you help us a little, nanshally, you know?

Amos. I fear not, uncle Schack. I wish I could.

But it is as much as I can do to live. When I came out of the war on one leg I had to look about for a living. Find some trade good for wages. I had to steal it.

Schack. Steal it, Mr. Amos?

Amos. Yes, Schack. These labor unions are close corporations and seek to keep up prices by restricting production. So only a favored few are permitted to learn a trade.

Schack. Doan clarly see.

Amos. Well, labor is combined against capital, as capital is combined against labor. Only labor has seized on one of the worst features of capital organization—that of forcing a limited supply.

Schack. Doan understan' dem language. But it do seem to dis chile dat you white folks dat was so ready to fight for de darkey, might fight foh yourselves.

Amos. Not much good in fighting, Schack. In all the century long war for human rights the people lose through fraud all that they gain through violence.

Schack. Jis, so; jis, so! I has obsarved de same. But tell us how you steal yer trade.

Amos. I found an old bullet-headed German willing to teach me cabinet making. It was a hard struggle, but I have it at last, and, thank Heaven, I am one of the union, and now we are all on a strike. Uncle Schack,

will you place this little workstand in the room of Miss Bessie? God bless her.

Schack. To be shu; to be shu. (*Exit with table.*)

Enter AUNT HESTER as from a walk.

Aunt Hester. Bless me, but I am tired. Walked from Fourteenth street to Central depot because I had n't money enough to pay car fare. Ah, Amos, you here?

Amos. Yes, Miss Hester. I am but now up from the city. Missed each other by a train.

Aunt Hester. Dear me, I am sorry. It would have been pleasant to have had your company. It is very unpleasant, Amos, to be so restricted in money matters as we are. When I think of our profusion in the past and our embarrassment now, I can scarcely believe we are the same people.

Amos. I can testify to the difference, Miss Hester.

Aunt Hester. We had such abundance, so much company, horses, carriages and servants without limit. I was a giddy young thing when brother Barr entertained at his house the entire legislature. Dear me, dear me, how long ago that seems! There was an elderly gentleman, Senator Shinglepeg, a man of large property, an old bachelor. You do n't remember, Amos?

Amos. No, Miss Hester.

Aunt Hester. No. Why how could you? You wern't

born then. Well, the senator fell desperately in love with me, and asked brother Barr for my hand. Well, well, I could n't abide him. He had a blue tooth and a cast in his eye—not much in the way of looks—but large property. Amos, I am sorry at times that I did n't shut my eye to his blue tooth and irregular eye. When I see the trouble we are in I am real sorry I did n't shut my giddy eyes to his two defects, for, in the main, barring the tooth and the eye, he was a good man and had a large property.

Amos. What became of him?

Aunt Hester. Why he just went on until he died. But a curious thing occurred one day after I refused him. My refusal seemed to have soured his temper, and, in an altercation with the sheriff, he used some inflammatory language, and the sheriff struck him on the head with a poker. That blow knocked out the blue tooth and straightened his eye.

Amos. You should have accepted him then.

Aunt Hester. He did n't propose again. I do n't believe I would have had him anyway. He had n't much hair, but a large property. I was a gay, giddy young thing then, Amos. You would scarcely believe it now, would you, Amos?

Amos. I do n't know about being gay and giddy, but my earliest recollections are hearing of the beauty, accomplishments and fascinations of Miss Hester Barr.

Aunt Hester. Dear me, dear me! Now, Amos, that is very kind of you. Now, I venture to say that, looking at my old face, you would n't believe such stories. Now, would you?

Enter SERGEANT BANGS.

Bangs. (*Saluting.*) Madam.

Aunt Hester. Same to you, Sir.

Bangs. Colonel Lacy's compliments. Will be pleased to call on Miss Barr this morning, if agreeable.

Aunt Hester. Say, Sergeant, Miss Barr will be pleased to see the Colonel. (*Sergeant salutes and exits.*) Amos, that absurd creature is no better than a stick. But I must inform Bessie. (*Enters house.*)

Amos. Bessie, I love the ground she walks on; the flower she looks at; the very air she breathes. There's music in the rustle of her dress and heaven in her voice, and I dare not breathe to her a word of this. A poor devil of a cripple; a mechanic, looking up to such an angel.

Enter BESSIE from house.

Bessie. Why, Amos, I am so glad to see you! I hurried out to thank you for that beautiful little workstand. But you must not do those things, Amos. It is not right. I fear you can not afford it.

Amos. (*Aside.*) She little dreams that I lived on one meal a day that I might make it. (*Aloud.*) Oh, that's

nothing, Miss Bessie. Would to God I could do more—to show my gratitude to your father.

Bessie. You exaggerate that service, Amos, and I can not permit you to be impoverishing yourself for our benefit. I am so sorry, Amos (*hesitating*)—

Amos. For what, Miss Bessie?

Bessie. That you selected such a hard calling through which to make a living. Why could n't you take a profession—say a lawyer or doctor. You are a man of education—a gentleman, Amos. Why, we looked on you as one of the family.

Amos. I had no choice. A profession means years of study and years of waiting. I had to find immediate support not only for myself but one I loved.

Bessie. You love some one, Amos? Tell me all about it.

Amos. There is not much to tell and I lack the words to tell it. I worship one so far above me that it is profanation to breathe her name in that connection. Oh, Bessie I have no hope but in her heart; no heaven but her love. And, yet, I dare not tell her this.

Bessie. Why not, Amos? There is no altar, however lowly, that may not send its incense up and be grateful, let the deity be ever so high.

Amos. That is all very well in poetry. But, when it

comes to real life, the love of a crippled mechanic offered to a lady is an insult.

Bessie. In old Virginia that was the condition. But here, Amos, where it is claimed that all honest labor is honorable, it must be different, and, to tell you the truth, my foster brother, this adversity in which we are plunged has taught me lessons.

Amos. (Eagerly.) And could you listen to a suit from such a source—a suit from a “greasy mechanic,” a “mud-sill,” as we call them?

Bessie. (After a pause.) I don’t know. I fear not. You see training and early prejudices get to be a second nature—much would depend on the oleaginous individual himself. Now, if he were like you, my brother—

Amos. Like me. Oh, Bessie!

Enter COLONEL LACY.

Lacy. A pleasant morning to you both. Miss Barr, you add sunlight to the house and fragrance to the garden. I am only happy when I bask in both.

Bessie. Colonel Lacy, you shame me with such speeches.

Lacy. Because your modesty adds grace to your loveliness. By the by, Amos, I was about to send for you. I have some work in your line I wish to consult you about. Can you not come to my house on your return to the city?

Amos. With pleasure. Now, I will see Mr. Barr.

Bessie. Do so, Amos, you will find him in our little breakfast room.

Amos. (*Aside.*) She smiles upon my superior officer, of course, and yet I came near telling her all. (*Exit.*)

Lacy. Now, my dear Bessie, have you thought on what I proposed when last we met?

Bessie. Thought and thought, until it seemed as if I would go wild. I can not yet see my way clear.

Lacy. Were you to follow your loving little heart, would it not lead you out?

Bessie. That is precisely where I fail. My loving little heart, as you call it, will not move. My poor head has to work alone.

Lacy. You can not love me—not the heart.

Bessie. (*Shaking her head.*) Colonel Lacy, I like you, I respect you, but all the love my heart can give is absorbed by my father—my poor old father.

Lacy. Therein lies my hope. In marrying you, my beautiful girl, I not only lift all care from his troubled heart, but place him in the ease to which his age and honors entitle him.

Bessie. It is very tempting, Colonel Lacy. We are very, very poor, and while I, young and strong, can bear this want, it is carrying his bent form and gray hairs in

sorrow to the grave. Oh, I could say, take me, take me, and help my father. But—

Lacy. What, my love?

Bessie. I fear you can not gain his consent, and I can not wed without that.

Lacy. Have you spoken to him?

Bessie. Dear me, no. But, observing your attentions, he has dropped words from time to time that indicate anything but favor.

Lacy. Of course, my darling. You are as sacred in his eyes as you are in mine. He has been looking into my life and finds it shocking.

Bessie. And have you been so bad?

Lacy. Too bad for such an angel as you are. But a chance should be given—it is given for reformation. Do you remember that beautiful passage in Holy Writ where the blind cripple heard the Savior passing and cried out to be taken to him? To every man once in his life the Savior passes. I see mine going by. Ah, my love, you hold in the hollow of your little hand my better destiny. Turn from me and I am lost.

Bessie. I do like you. I believe in you. I—

Lacy. Your father comes. May I address him now?

Bessie. Oh, no, not now. Wait. I am so confused.

Lacy. Walk this way and think of it. (*Exeunt.*)

Enter HAMILTON BARR *and* AMOS.

Barr. I am glad to hear of some response to my offer of twenty-five thousand dollars reward for a clue to that lost money. I can not and will not give up the hope of regaining at least some of it. A part of those securities were numbered and recorded. They have never been used, for they may be traced.

Amos. I got this note through the post. It hints at some information. See. (*Reads.*) "If Mr. Amos Adze will grant an interview with the undersigned, he will learn something of the lost property for which Mr. Hamilton Barr offers a reward of twenty-five thousand dollars. Beckwith, detective No. 10, etc." I answered, asking him to come here this morning. He ought to have reported ere this.

Enter SCHACK.

Schack. Dar is a genelman at de doar askin' foh Mr. Amos Adze, sah.

Barr. Tell him to walk this way.

Schack. Yes, sah.

Barr. Bless, my soul, Amos, I am getting old and dim-sighted, but that man approaching is—

Amos. Your former overseer, Buckthorn. What can he want?

Barr. No good. I always detested him, and have

had for some unknown reason suspicion that he had something to do with that theft.

Enter BUCKTHORN.

Buckthorn. Morning, gentlemen. You seem surprised to see me and I am very glad to see you both at last.

Barr. (*Stiffly.*) Well, sir, and what can I do for you?

Buckthorn. It is n't what you can do for me, but what I can do for you, that brought me here. I am Beckwith, detective.

Barr. We know you as Buckthorn, overseer.

Buckthorn. I took that name when I entered that business.

Barr. Ashamed of the old one?

Buckthorn. No, sir; on the contrary, too proud of it. I am of a good English family, sir, fallen into decay, and when I stooped to such a degradation as that of overseer, I left the name behind.

Barr. The man who seeks to save a name while degrading himself, lets go the substance that he may cling to a shadow. But what is your business with us?

Buckthorn. You lost a large sum of money on the occupation of your place by the Union army. You offer twenty-five thousand dollars reward for its recovery.

Barr. True.

Buckthorn. I believe I have a clue.

Barr. What is it?

Buckthorn. On that night I happened near the old tomb where the money was concealed, and I saw a man in the uniform of a Federal officer coming from it, and, as the door was forced open, I naturally concluded that he was the thief.

Barr. And in all these years you have not communicated these facts to me!

Buckthorn. I did not know of the loss, and, when I did hear of it, I could not find you.

Barr. True, I came North to realize on a small property left my child by a relative. And this man?

Buckthorn. Was and is a stranger to me. I have never seen him since.

Barr. Well, I must say Mr. Buckthorn, or Beckwith, this is a very dim clue. Among the million of men making up that army one man is the needle in a hay-stack. The fellow may have been killed.

Buckthorn. He did not take all that money with him to another world. But you may be sure he is alive. No heirs would guard the plunder as he is doing.

Barr. That is a shrewd surmise, for some of the lost valuables were in English securities, numbered and recorded. On that I base my hopes. What do you propose doing?

Buckthorn. I thought if Mr. Adze here, who joined the Federal forces that night, could give the number and name of that regiment which first arrived, I could probably find my man. I would know him were I to meet him again.

Barr. How about that, Amos?

Amos. I fear it would be of small service. The first brigade that made the crossing pushed on. I suppose, however, we can find by earnest search what Beckwith needs. You have a diary I kept of my life in the army that I bound and presented Miss Bessie. There may be some dates of use in it.

Barr. I know that book. It is on my table. Go with him, Amos, and search for what we need.

AMOS and BECKWITH *enter house*; *enter* LACY and BESSIE.

Bessie. (To LACY.) He looks angry and troubled. Had you not better postpone?

Lacy. No, now is my opportunity. (BESSIE *enters house.*) Good morning, Mr. Barr.

Barr. (Coldly.) Good morning, sir.

Lacy. I am glad to find you alone. I have a delicate matter to communicate of vital importance to me.

Barr. Well, sir?

Lacy. You have doubtlessly observed my attachment for your lovely daughter.

Barr. I have observed your attentions, sir.

Lacy. I am deeply attached and I have reason to believe that it is not unpleasant to her.

Barr. Colonel Lacy, have you dared to approach my daughter as a suitor for her hand?

Lacy. I have.

Barr. I am amazed! I am indignant, sir, that you dare commit such an outrage.

Lacy. I can not see wherein an honorable offer of marriage is such an offense.

Barr. Colonel Lacy, your offer is not honorable. It is not the act of a gentleman.

Lacy. Mr. Barr, is it necessary to couch your refusal in an insult?

Barr. The insult is in the offer, sir.

Lacy. I really can not comprehend—

Barr. You are dull, sir, or very designing. I have but one child, Colonel Lacy. My noble boy sleeps at Antietam in an unmarked grave. All I have to cling to in life is this poor girl. I could not see you so obviously attentive without inquiring as to your life, character and conduct. I have learned enough to shut my humble door in your face.

Lacy. May I beg to know—

Barr. This is intolerable. You have a wife living—a wife you are ashamed of—

Lacy. That is all wrong. I have no wife—

Barr. So much the worse for you. Enough of this! I am an old man, hardly knowing from whence our next meal is to come, but I would rather see my daughter in some man's kitchen, or wearing her life out sewing in a garret, than put her pure soul in the keeping of your polluted hands. You have my answer, sir.

Enter AMOS and BUCKTHORN from house.

Amos. He got no clue.

Buckthorn. (*Aside, seeing LACY.*) By the Lord, here is our man! (*Aloud.*) But I have. (*LACY, turning sees BUCKTHORN, and starts back.*) How are you, Captain? It is sometime since we met. (*To COLONEL LACY.*) Keep cool, Captain. I am silent as the tomb.

Barr. You know this man?

Buckthorn. (*Significantly.*) I know him! Yes, and what's more important, he knows me. We know each other. (*Attempts to lay his hand on LACY'S shoulder in a familiar manner.*)

Lacy. Off, you scoundrel! (*Hurls BUCKTHORN to the floor.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE: Lawn in front of Lacy's house. Across the stage back runs a wall with door in it. Wall just high enough to show the tops of horses' heads. House, with fancy entrance, to the right. Rustic tables, chairs, settees, etc.

Enter SCHACK with sack coat on; pushes a chicken in and steals across.

Schack. Now, ef I kin git past dis house widout observation, I'se all right. Got a truly good lay out dis time. (*Enter LACY and AMOS from house.*) Lor a mity, heah de 'prietor hisself.

Lacy. Hello, uncle Schack, how are you?

Schack. (*Edging off.*) I'se purty well, tank 'ee, sah.

Lacy. How are they at the cottage? Come nearer, man.

Schack. Ya, ha, take care, sah. I'se got small-pox in my clos', sah. Yah, yah.

Lacy. Yes, we heard that joke. Come, that laugh was worth a dollar. There it is, Schack.

Schack. Oh, tank 'ee, sah, tank 'ee. You's mity good to ole Schack, you is.

Lacy. Why, Uncle Schack, you seem to be loaded down with live stock. How's this?

Schack. Yes, sah; yes, sah; was down to de village,

sah; seed some nice fowls and eggs, sah; jis buy 'em an' put 'em in dese big pockets.

Lacy. Let me see what kind of a bargain you were up to, Uncle Schack? (*Puts his hand in Schack's pocket.*)

Schack. (*Aside.*) Oh, de Lawd! I'se a gone coon now, shu nuff.

Lacy. (*Pulling out chicken.*) Why, Schack, you certainly are not so extravagant as to buy fancy fowls for the table. How many have you got of these, now?

Schack. Jis foh, sah; jis foh, sah.

Lacy. Well, I can't have such lovely birds sacrificed in this manner. Now, Uncle Schack, I will buy them of you. Now, what do you value the fowls at?

Schack. Well, sah, if dey was de common sort, I 'spose dey was worf fifty cents a pair, but de fancy breed, sah, as you say, is valuable. Say foh dollars for de lot.

Lacy. All right. There, I make it five. Drop them in the stable yard as you go along.

Schack. All right, sah. I say, I forgot. Miss Bessie say in answer to yer note she and her aunt Hester walk ober dis arternoon.

Lacy. Thank you. There's a gold piece for you, Schack.

Schack. Thank 'ee, sah. (*Aside.*) I dun sole him his own chickens. Fore de Lawd, but I did perspire. (*Exit.*)

Lacy. That poor old man goes about at the risk of his life appropriating poultry for this arrogant old Virginian's table. I wonder if he does not suspect.

Amos. He is too much lost in his own miseries.

Lacy. That is true, and too proud and stubborn to permit any one to aid him. You understand, Amos, what I want done within, and, to accomplish it, am willing to expend liberally.

Amos. The house seems perfect to my eyes as it stands, and it seems a pity to pull down and rebuild.

Lacy. It was constructed before the esthetic craze took possession of our people. We had an order of architecture, peculiarly American, we called the comfortable. Now, flat, Japanese barbarism is grafted on early English crudity, and what with lilies, storks, sunflowers, and peacock tails, spindle-shanked chairs and tables, we are esthetic as monkeys in purple and fine linen, and about as miserable.

Amos. Why give into it, Colonel?

Lacy. You might as well expect a fish to live out of water as for one to reside inside society and override its whims. No, Amos, go at it. Employ men; knock down; tear out, and build up. You can't go amiss, for the more errors you make the more esthetic we shall appear.

Amos. All right, Colonel. Your orders shall be obeyed. (*Exit.*)

Enter BANG.

Bang. (*Saluting.*) Colonel.

Lacy. Sergeant Bang.

Bang. I have to report, a hard looking party outside asks entrance.

Lacy. Who?

Bang. Name, sir. (*Hands card.*)

Lacy. (*Reads.*) "Beckwith, Detective." Show the man in. (*Bang salutes and exits.*) Now, for a scene with my confederate, a hard customer, with iniquity fairly enameled on his ugly face; one of those fellows at war with the world, possessed of enough courage and cunning to keep him in trouble all the time. And I made this scoundrel my equal and partner. (*Enter BUCKTHORN.*) Well, Mr. Beckwith, have you come to apologize?

Buckthorn. For being knocked down?

Lacy. No, for provoking that breach of good manners?

Buckthorn. You do n't remember; you do n't recognize me.

Lacy. To the best of my knowledge and belief I never saw your intellectual countenance before, and, Mr. Beckwith, I can assure you that I have no wish ever to see it again.

Buckthorn. Oh, very likely. (*Seating himself on table.*) I have no question but you would feel more comfortable if I were *non est*.

Lacy. Now, listen to me, Mr. Beckwith, detective, and pay attention to what I say, for it will not be repeated. If you do n't drop that offensive, familiar manner, you will not only be knocked down, but kicked off this place. It is some distance from here to the road. Get off that table and try to behave like a respectable man—I won't say gentleman. That is impossible.

Buckthorn. (*Getting off table.*) Oh, you're a cool one.

Lacy. There it is again. I am not solicitous to know your opinion of me.

Buckthorn. Should think not.

Lacy. Once for all, will you drop that, or shall I have you kicked off the place?

Buckthorn. As you will, Captain Lacy. I will not quarrel with you, if I can help it, Captain Lacy.

Lacy. I am not Captain Lacy. I left the army a Colonel and Brigadier-General by brevet. I care nothing for my title; but, since you put such stress on it, you may as well have it correctly.

Buckthorn. You were a Captain once, when the Union army forced a crossing at Barr's ferry.

Lacy. I could not well be promoted else. Why Barr's ferry?

Buckthorn. There was a strange affair occurred there. I was overseer upon the place of the old gentleman, then

very wealthy, now poor and your tenant. On the night of the occupation this old man hid all that was his in the world in the family vault and that night the vault was opened and the money stolen.

Lacy. I have heard that story before. It is not interesting through its novelty.

Buckthorn. Perhaps I can make it more so. There was a poor man, somewhat down in the world, living in that locality, who saw the valuables hidden and found a Union officer ready to dig them up, and who did dig and walk off with same.

Lacy. Well, sir?

Buckthorn. I saw all this done.

Lacy. And you dare insinuate—

Buckthorn. Oh, no, Colonel Lacy. I did that once and got knocked down. No danger of my repeating the experiment. Your resemblance to that officer was so striking, that I for a moment forgot myself.

Lacy. Do n't repeat the offense, then.

Buckthorn. There is another strange resemblance.

Lacy. What is it?

Buckthorn. Not willing to let the Captain off, who had so suddenly grown rich, I lingered round the tomb, and saw my Captain joined by a woman—right pretty woman she was in the bright light of burning stores. Her face impressed me.

Lacy. Well, proceed.

Buckthorn. The other day, in my capacity of detective, I was employed by Shyster & Gripp, divorce lawyers, to work up the case of Lacy against Lacy, for an Indiana court. It was no easy job, for Mrs. Lacy knew what she was about in her little pranks, and I had to find good witnesses to swear to what we knew but could n't prove. Do you know, Colonel, that a case against a good woman who is a little imprudent is always easier than against a guilty one? You see, the guilty one covers her track.

Lacy. Enough of this. Go on with your story.

Buckthorn. It makes a very material part of it. We got the divorce. Shyster & Gripp requested me, as I was coming this way, to give you a certified copy of the decree freeing you from the late Mrs. Lacy.

Lacy. Thanks. But what has all this to do with the lost money of Mr. Hamilton Barr?

Buckthorn. That is what I am trying to discover.

Lacy. Well, I can't aid you in that.

Buckthorn. Do n't believe you will. You see, Colonel, I did not know Mrs. Lacy when I was employed, but it was necessary that I should know her, and, when I came to see her, I was struck—I assure you I was struck—I knew that face, and yet, I could not place it.

Lacy. Well.

Buckthorn. Why, Colonel, fancy plays such odd tricks with a man, he is n't safe. I thought you resembled my Union officer, and now your late wife seems to be that identical woman.

Lacy. And you return by another road to that infamous charge. You dare assert—

Buckthorn. Oh, no, Colonel. I know I must be mistaken. A gentleman of your high position could never stoop to such a theft, and then keep the poor old man and his starving family hanging on the little end of desperation. I ask your pardon. I must be crazy. I will at once set myself free of the delusion by asking the late Mrs. Lacy. She won't like you or me much after what we have done to her, but I guess she 'll blurt out the truth.

Lacy. Mr.—What is the name? (*Looking at card.*) Beckwith, detective, you have executed your business here. Now, there is the avenue to the road and the road to the station. The sooner you start and the more rapidly you travel the better for all parties.

Buckthorn. Thank you, Colonel; thank you. If you should ever want me, my address is on the card.

Lacy. I shall never need you; the police may. (*Buckthorn starts.*) Now, go. (*Exit BUCKTHORN.*) I am running close upon a lee shore. The word of that fellow is not worth heeding, but supplemented by Helen's

would be ruin. Nothing can save me but an immediate elopement and marriage with Bessie, the little angel.

(*Enter BANG, followed by BESSIE and AUNT HESTER.*)

Bang. Colonel.

Lacy. Sergeant.

Bang. The ladies.

Lacy. Show Miss Hester the grounds and gather a bouquet from the conservatory, Sergeant, while I entertain Miss Barr.

Bang. All right, Colonel. Orders from headquarters, Miss.

Aunt Hester. Which I am supposed to obey?

Bang. Regulations, Miss. (*Exit with Aunt Hester.*)

Lacy. It was very good of you, my love, to accord me this interview. It may be our last.

Bessie. Our last?

Lacy. I made my humble appeal to your father this morning, and had it met with a refusal couched in an insult, so grave that I can not approach him again.

Bessie. My father? I can't comprehend. I can understand why he should shrink from parting with me, his only child, but why he should insult you is strange.

Lacy. Not when you are possessed of the facts. Your father was right in his refusal, and it does not lie in my mouth to complain of the insult.

Bessie. And why?

Lacy. Because it was and is deserved. I am all unworthy of you, my angel. The man who offers you a home should be above reproach, and that home should be as pure as heaven.

Bessie. Are you so wicked, Edmund.

Lacy. I never knew how wicked until I read it by the light of your innocent love. I knew that part of the dark story would be told you, and I could not bear to have it come from hostile lips that would make it darker than it is. I asked to see you that I might confess all, plead forgiveness, and go my way to poverty and shame with the one comfort of your forgiveness.

Bessie. Poverty and shame?

Lacy. Yes, for I must make restitution, and that leaves me poor indeed, for it robs me not only of wealth, but a good name.

Bessie. You shall not do this. Surely repentance need not be accompanied with such a penalty.

Lacy. It needs full restitution, and if in the confession I can save myself from your contempt, it is all I ask.

Bessie. I will not hear it. You have given me your love, and, in so doing, prohibited my being your judge. Let me deal frankly with you as you seek to deal with me. I do not love you. I do n't know how to express myself—I like you; I respect your every act. Your every

word deepens that respect until I am willing to trust my all to your keeping, and, I am ashamed to say it, I lift my poor old father in doing so from the distress that is killing him.

Lacy. You force me, dear girl, to tell you all.

Bessie. Oh, no. Let the dead past rest in its grave. I accept your present; I trust your future.

Lacy. You can not accept or trust until I tell you all, for the dead past will not down. The gaunt apparition will leave the altar at your side and come between when too late for any exorcism of mine.

Bessie. As you will. (*Seats herself; LACY walks to and fro agitated.*)

Lacy. The night of the occupation of your dear old home in Virginia your father lost, through a vile theft, all he possessed on earth.

Bessie. I know.

Lacy. I am that thief.

Bessie. (*Starting up.*) Edmund Lacy!

Lacy. Hear me. Your father's overseer led me to the spot; dug up and gave me the money. Up to that moment my life had been honest and honorable. I could kill for my country, I thought; I could not plunder for myself. The temptation was too great. I fell. (*She sits again, covering her face with her hands.*) I see you shrink in shame. It is my punishment. I am man enough yet to bear it. It is my worst.

Bessie. This is horrible!

Lacy. Years after, when I found you and your father stripped to want through my sin, I strove hard to compromise my iniquity by aiding him. Your father's stubborn pride stood in the way. I could only get him to accept the little cottage on this place at a nominal rent. I saw you; I loved you.

Bessie. Why not, through that love, make restitution without this horrible confession?

Lacy. I had made that impossible. Hear me out. The worst is yet to come. A girl, a camp follower, witnessed my crime. To close her mouth, I made her my wife.

Bessie. (*Starting up.*) And you dared add insult to injury by offering me your hand—

Lacy. Ah, no. This woman freed herself of the restraint that marriage imposed. It was not until I was free of her that I ventured to approach you. The grave, indignant face of your dear father awakened me to the hopeless folly of such an attempt.

Bessie. And you are free?

Lacy. There is the decree granting the divorce. I am free of her, but I am not free to approach you.

Bessie. And now?

Lacy. To-night I will confess to your dear father as I have confessed to you; return him all, to the last cent,

with interest, his lost property, and to-morrow go forth a ruined and disgraced man. (*After a pause.*) Miss Barr, I will recall your companion and bid you good-bye.

Bessie. Not yet. Let me think. This revelation has been so sudden, so terrible, I can not grasp it. Let me consider for a moment. (*After a pause.*) I have resolved, Edmund, you shall not do this thing. I can not consent to such a sacrifice. That cruel war so confused all sense of right and wrong, your act loses half its evil. You are generous in your offer of self-sacrifice, and if my little hand can save you, I stretch it out to you.

Lacy. Bessie, my darling, my savior! But your father will never consent to this.

Bessie. Yes, if we wait long enough to win his approval.

Lacy. There is too much peril in the waiting.

Bessie. You fear me?

Lacy. Yes; a little reflection—cooler thought, your very self-respect will come between and drive us apart. Ah, my darling, better never to have tendered the hope, than to follow it with disappointment. I could have given you up before. I can not now.

Bessie. What would you?

Lacy. Have you wed and win approval after. I would secure you past all doubt.

Bessie. Is not this selfish?

Lacy. Beyond question, selfish. You offer life to a dying man; hope to the condemned; succor to one drowning, and I grasp the little hand till it pains you. Oh, my angel, trust me, believe in me; give me control!

Bessie. I do; I will.

Lacy. To-night your father visits the city on business that will detain him till late. I will come to the cottage; take you to my carriage, and when he returns, it will be to find us man and wife.

Bessie. Poor father; but it is for his good. I shall expect you, and may heaven grant that I shall never regret what I am doing. (*Coach horn heard without.*) What is that?

Lacy. Philip Fitzpoodle with his coach. He served notice on me that this would be made a station to-day, and I am to entertain the passengers.

(*Coach drawn by four horses enters back of wall. The heads of horses only are seen, with the top of coach, on which are seated FITZPOODLE, driving, HELEN, LORD TOMNODDY, and one, two, and three ladies; also, one, two, and three gentlemen.*)

Fitzpoodle. (*From box of coach.*) Hillo, the house!

Lacy. (*Putting on apron and cap.*) Hillo, the coach! (*Passengers descend as LACY goes out at gate as waiter, bowing to them in old style.*) This way, ladies and gentlemen, this

way; you are welcome to Lacy Lodge. (*As they enter BESSIE goes out, HELEN staring at her.*)

Fitzpoodle. I say, Ned, you do it up in first rate style; eh, me lawd?

Tomnoddy. Remarkably correct, you know. Gad, ye'd think him keeper of a beer house; you would, indeed.

Lacy. Thanks; be seated, ladies and gentlemen; what shall it be—milk or champagne? Do n't hesitate. Cost about the same.

Fitzpoodle. I say iced milk, with plenty of grog and no sugar, is good for a hot day.

First Gentleman. More milk and less grog, Fitz, if you're going to drive. Do n't want another excitement, by Jove.

Lacy. What's that?

First Gentleman. Last Wednesday Fitz got too much grog aboard, and, tooling through the park, he collided on a family vehicle, and spilled infant Jacobs along for a hundred yards. Then the police got after us, you know, and such a racket; just tumbled through, and got fined a hundred a piece for damages and violation of ordinance. Do n't want any more of that, you know, in mine.

Fitzpoodle. Can tool the conveyince through all drunk better than any party can sober. Hi'll take grog; give the ladies champagne.

Helen. Bother your slops; give me a glass of beer.

First Lady. Me, too.

Second Lady. I ditto.

Third Lady. I likewise.

Helen. Unanimous. (*BANG and servants serve refreshments.*)

Fitzpoodle. Now, let's have a little turn at lawn tennis while the stock is baiting; then on into town. Come, all of you. (*Exeunt all save LACY and HELEN.*)

Helen. What a lot! What do you think of that?

Lacy. A good imitation of a bad original. The cad of London is the swell of New York. We can not be original even in our folly. Now, Nell, to what am I indebted for this unexpected pleasure of seeing you?

Helen. To a judge out in Indiana. I received this morning a solemn looking document that informed me that the partnership heretofore existing between one Edmund Lacy and a certain Helen Lacy was dissolved on petition of plaintiff, said Edmund Lacy. Now, Hub, that was mean.

Lacy. You asked a separation and I granted it.

Helen. Correct.

Lacy. And now you complain that I make all this legal.

Helen. No, I don't. I complain of its being done so hastily and without my knowledge.

Lacy. And would your knowledge have made any difference?

Helen. Some little. You stole into an Indiana court and stuffed the chaste ears of the learned judge with a pack of lies respecting my virtuous character.

Lacy. Correct.

Helen. I was about to save you all that trouble and expense, and you have spoiled my little scheme.

Lacy. Very sorry.

Helen. No, you are not. But, like all men, you have muddled the business amazingly, and it was mean.

Lacy. How, for example.

Helen. Edmund, late husband, the only thing beside my beauty that I inherited from poor, but respected parents, whoever they were, was a faculty for keeping my eyes open. With them open I have seen the little game you are playing here.

Lacy. Indeed!

Helen. Pshaw! This palatial residence on the Hudson, the little cottage attached, the pretty little Bessie Barr in one, Edmund Lacy, late husband in the other. I'll bet two to one, and no takers, that the sly little puss we met coming in was the inexpressive she going out.

Lacy. Well?

Helen. It is far from well. You wish Mrs. Lacy No. 2,

young, handsome, and another and a final look to the door of that tomb upon the James.

Lacy. And why should I seek to make more secure that which is so well sealed?

Helen. Is it? Oh, you near-sighted gentleman! A quantity of those securities were numbered and recorded. You were foolish enough to hypothecate them in the purchase of this place. A reward of twenty-five thousand dollars is offered, and a description of the missing bonds given. Secure stealing? You make me smile. I could have aided you, and yet you spoil my little game by throwing me over through an Indiana court, getting a lot of rascals to swear to a lot of lies. I was about to save you that, too.

Lacy. Your little game? I do not understand.

Helen. Of course you do n't. Like all men you have your appreciative mind fixed on yourself, and are oblivious to all others. Edmund, late husband, do you know that I have one vice?

Lacy. I beg pardon. I thought to have discerned several.

Helen. And yet your divorce lawyers had to suborn witnesses to prove one, and that not the real one. Edmund, I am ambitious. Old Will says beware of ambition—I court it.

Lacy. Well?

Helen. I would have my name in every one's mouth on Murray Hill; I would have it in every newspaper in the land. To this end I had arranged to elope with Lord Tomnoddy this very night.

Lacy. Well, if this is not brutal frankness, I do n't know the article.

Helen. It was delicious. All fashionable New York is crazy over simple Tom. Mothers fling innocent daughters at his head; wives run after him, and the men, old and young, bump their empty heads upon the floor in his presence. To-morrow the startled world was to read astounding fashionable news: Lord Tomnoddy, the pet of Murray Hill, has eloped with the beautiful, accomplished, and fascinating Mrs. Colonel Edmund Alfred Lacy, Colonel Lacy, late of the United States Army. I prepared the notices myself, and they are in the hands of the reporters, and now, you stupid, you have spoiled it all.

Lacy. I can't see it. You are free to run away—more free than before.

Helen. You would exasperate a saint! What have I left to run from. Ridiculous! A divorced wife! Why, it would make simple Tom mad and us both ridiculous. No, I must give it up and get in my reports. This is a blunder, Hub, that amounts to a crime. You must be punished. You shall not marry that innocent girl. You must marry me again and give me another chance.

Lacy. And if I refuse?

Helen. I will run over to the old Virginian and tell him the whole story.

Lacy. And lose your \$5,000 a year.

Helen. Not a bit of it. In view of the uncertainties of life incident to Wall street, I had that put in securities no wise affected by this—what-shall-I-call-it—forced loan from Virginia.

Lacy. You'll think better of this.

Helen. No, I won't. I'll think worse.

Fitzpoodle. (*Outside.*) Hello, Lacy. We want you.

Lacy. I am called. Wait here a moment. (*Exit.*)

Helen. Poor old Ned! What a muss he has made of it. He must be taught to appreciate my assistance.

Enter BUCKTHORN.

Buckthorn. Madam, I have something to say to you.

Helen. I hope it is not complimentary, for I could not reciprocate. I think—you must excuse me—you have about the worst face I ever saw. What a get-up for a heavy villian in a melodrama.

Buckthorn. We must not be seen together.

Helen. Oh, don't be uneasy. That countenance of yours is any woman's protection. As the politicians say, it might be called a prohibitory tariff.

Buckthorn. We have no time for trifling. You are a wronged woman—most damnably wronged.

Helen. Oh, thank you for nothing. I have known that for some time. Your information is quite gratuitous.

Buckthorn. You do n't know the extent of your wrongs. I am Beckwith, the detective. I was employed to blast your character in an Indiana court.

Helen. You are—are you that same scoundrel? And to what do I owe this sudden compunction?

Buckthorn. The fact that we can punish the instigator of the offense and divide a cool million between us.

Helen. Now, you deep-dyed villain, you heavy villain, will you please tell me how this is to be done?

Buckthorn. I was the man that saw that treasure buried. I was the man that dug it up and gave it to Captain Lacy. You saw it also. Our joint testimony will force him to disgorge.

Helen. What a revelation!

Buckthorn. There is no time to lose. He has planned an elopement with the old Virginian's only child to-night. That once accomplished and our game is blocked. Where can I meet you in the city.

Helen. Elope with her? Not much. He must marry me. He headed off my elopement; I will spoil his.

Buckthorn. Quick, madam. They are breaking up. Give me your address.

Helen. (*Handing card.*) There it is. I shall be at home at eight this evening. (*BUCKTHORN seizes card and hurries off.*)

Coach comes on as before, winding horn. Enter LORD TOMNODDY.

Lord Tomnoddy. Got away from the beastly lot, me gull, to remind you of your promise. Steamer sails to-morrow. My adoration will not disappoint me?

Helen. I fear I must, me lawd.

Lord Tomnoddy. Ah, no, naw! You caunt mean it, and our passages taken and my kit packed?

Helen. Caunt help it, me lawd. The elopement is indefinitely postponed.

Lord Tomnoddy. Naw, look here. Isn't this rawther hard times on a poor devil. I say it is the worst case of jilt I ever knew.

Helen. Not my fault, me lawd. This beast of a husband has gone, without my knowledge, and obtained an Indiana divorce.

Lord Tomnoddy. What's that?

Helen. A short cut across lots to a legal severance of the marriage knot; very mean, sneaking, and contemptible, but effectual. You can not elope with a divorced woman. That's ridiculous. You can marry me.

Lord Tomnoddy. That's more damnably absurd than

the other. Why, I never knew such a howling cad as this husband, you know. I could kick him. (*Enter LACY, FITZPOODLE, and crowd. To LACY.*) Ah, me deah fellow, we've had a jolly good time. We have, indeed. Would like to see you at Castle Barrows to reciprocate your elegant hospitality, you know.

Fitzpoodle. Had a devil of a good time.

Lacy. Thanks.

Fitzpoodle. All aboard.

Helen. Ta, ta, hubby. (*Exit all save LACY; mount coach and drive off, horn sounding.*)

Lacy. Gone at last, thank heaven. Now, for my arrangements. (*Enter BUCKTHORN.*) Here again? What did I promise you if you appeared upon this place?

Buckthorn. Captain—I beg your pardon, Colonel—Lacy, you are too hasty. You are in great peril. I can save you.

Lacy. When my salvation depends on your saving grace may I be damned.

Buckthorn. But Captain—Colonel, I mean. You don't know all. That woman has gone back on you. She is on her way to the city this minute to make complaint. Now, give me fifty thousand and I will make it secure.

Lacy. Not a cent.

Buckthorn. Say twenty-five.

Lacy. Never. Now, go.

Buckthorn. Say ten.

Lacy. (*Taking out his watch.*) Listen, you scoundrel. I give you one minute to get off this place.

Buckthorn. Oh, look here. Listen to reason. Make it five thousand and a ticket to California.

Lacy. You have lost two seconds. (*Rings bell.*) There goes another.

Buckthorn. (*Going.*) I'll make you suffer for this. Let us see how you'll keep it up.

Lacy. Twenty seconds left. (*Exit BUCKTHORN as BANG enters.*) Bang, have my carriage at the turn of the road nearest the cottage precisely at eight o'clock to-night. You must drive. Tell John I wish him to remain at home and nurse that sick colt. Do you understand?

Bang. All right, Colonel. (*Exit. Whistle of train heard.*)

Lacy. If he makes that train he will gain an hour. The next, an express, passes this station without stopping. There he runs across the field. There is a jump of twelve feet. God-send, he breaks his neck! No, he is over. The devil is kind to his own. He makes the train. An hour to town; an hour to find Helen; an hour for the police, and an hour in which to return—four hours. I can accomplish my purpose in that time, if at all.

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE: Interior of Barr cottage. Glass windows, giving sunset on Hudson.—After, moonlight. Room, doors right and left. Bessie discovered sewing. Aunt Hester and Schack.

Aunt Hester. We want fish for breakfast. Brother Hamilton's appetite is so delicate that it is almost impossible to find any thing for him to eat.

Schack. Its a'most impossible to find any ting foh any ob us to eat.

Aunt Hester. Oh, as for us, we can eat almost any thing.

Schack. When we gets 'em.

Aunt Hester. And Schack, be very careful of that wine Governor Medcalf sent out for your master.

Schack. Jis' as careful as if it was a suckin' chile. I watches dat wine as a hawk watches a hen roost.

Aunt Hester. Now, mind; fresh fish for breakfast. Do them, Schack, in good old Virginia style—rolled in corn meal, and fried in fresh butter by a quick fire.

Schack. Fish an' fresh butter.

Aunt Hester. What do you repeat that for?

Schack. Why, Missus, dar aint a speck of fresh buttah in dis house, and wha' dem fish is to come from de Lawd alone knows.

Aunt Hester. That is your business. I told you fresh fish this morning. What are you about, Schack?

Schack. About a good many tings. I'se cook an' chamba'maid. I'se de vally de shamble to de ole masta. I runs errands an' answers de doah-bell, an' de meantime, 'tween 'em all, I mends my wearin' 'parel and cobble my shoes.

Aunt Hester. Well, you have twenty-four hours a day to do that in. Why grumble?

Schack. I aint a 'grumblin', tho' I does have to stretch dem twenty-foh hours sometimes.

Aunt Hester. Well, do n't forget the fish.

Schack. Foh de Lawd. I reads in de Scriptur ob de good Savior feedin' de multitudes on five fish an' five loaves. I'd like to know how he did it—I would.

Aunt Hester. Schack, this Northern life is fast ruining you. You are actually getting profane.

Schack. Profane? I'd like to see de man, white or brack, 'ed carry dis family as I does an' not, at times—at times, I say, not allers, but at times—let out wickedness. Now, 'bout dem fish. Dar aint no market 'twixt now an' breakfast time, an' I'll jis' step ober to Colonel Lacy's wid de compliments ob de masta, an' ask foh de loan of three or foh fish out of his fish pon'. Foh de buttah—I declar foh de Lawd, I doan know what to do foh dat buttah. Guess I ax foh de loan ob de buttah, also. (*Exit, grumbling.*)

Aunt Hester. That old nigger is getting very troublesome. I do wish brother Hamilton would employ some one to help him.

Bessie. Aunt, what Uncle Schack says—dear old man—is the melancholy truth. He is carrying this family on his old shoulders.

Aunt Hester. Well, I know he is faithful and industrious, and all that, but he is getting so impudent in his importance. Why, he talks as if we were dependent on him.

Bessie. I fear, dear aunt, there is too much truth in what his manner asserts.

Aunt Hester. What do you mean?

Bessie. That to his exertions we owe our daily bread. Oh, aunt, it is too humiliating! You don't know. You have n't seen what I am forced to see. This good old man actually steals that we may live.

Aunt Hester. Bessie, I can't believe this. You are in error, child.

Bessie. No, no; I am not. I had proof of it to-day.

Aunt Hester. But he has means given him.

Bessie. To buy such food as we have, aunt, he has little or nothing. It is horrible.

Aunt Hester. What! a great Virginia family reduced to such degradation? What can we do?

Bessie. (*Heavily.*) Oh, I don't know. Yes, I do! Colonel Lacy offered father his hand to me in marriage

this morning and father refused with insult. I can not understand it. I will sacrifice myself that he may live. I see him failing day by day, his dear head bowed in want and misery. What is my life to his and yours? I am resolved.

Aunt Hester. On what, my child?

Bessie. To marry him without my father's consent.

Aunt Hester. Oh, Bessie.

Bessie. What can we do? I can not see him dying by inches, his gray hairs going down in sorrow to the grave. I am resolved to act, and act at once.

Aunt Hester. Do you love this Colonel Lacy?

Bessie. I don't know. What matters it? It is my duty to sacrifice myself. I know that he is a gentleman. I can respect him. Indeed, aunt, there is real nobility in his nature. I can see it, if my father can not.

Aunt Hester. Bessie, be careful. Remember you are a Barr—the only child of a noble family. Better abide by your father's decision.

Bessie. A noble family in rags! A noble family living on the questionable efforts of an old slave. My father's stubborn pride holds out even before death from want. Oh, no; my way is plain before me. For his sake, for yours, for myself, I go the way my duty points. (*Bell rings.*) It is Colonel Lacy. Aunt, leave us, please.

Aunt Hester. Oh, my child, be careful.

Bessie. I will; I will. (*Kissing her.*) Good-night, aunt.

Aunt Hester. Good-night, my darling. (*Exit.*)

Bessie. I tremble like an aspen. I feel that I am doing wrong. Heaven, help me.

Enter COLONEL LACY.

Lacy. I come, my little girl. I come to claim you, my love. Are you yet resolved?

Bessie. (*After a pause.*) Yes; I am a Barr. My promise is as sacred as an oath. I am resolved against my father's will. I disobey that I may save him.

Lacy. You are right, my darling. Trust me, and if I fail or falter may heaven fail me! My carriage waits us. A short drive, a little ceremony, and you are mine. Put on your hat and wraps. (*Bell rings.*) Who can that be?

Bessie. Surely not my father. He is in the city.

Enter AMOS ADZE.

Amos. Uncle Schack informed me that I would find you in. He said nothing of you, Colonel, or I should not have intruded.

Bessie. No intrusion, Amos. The Colonel and I were about to take a stroll. Will you excuse me while I see my aunt again, and put on my hat?

Amos. Certainly. I want a few minutes with my Colonel before I return to town.

Bessie. (*Aside to Lacy.*) He will leave while I am out. (*Exit.*)

Lacy. Sit down, Amos. I have a little time at your disposal.

Amos. Thank you, Colonel. (*Sitting.*)

Lacy. What is it, my boy?

Amos. I hardly know where or how to begin.

Lacy. I listen.

Amos. You know, Colonel, my poor mother, left a widow when I was a boy, was lifted out of want by Mr. Barr, and I was adopted in his family, reared and educated as one of his own.

Lacy. You have told me as much.

Amos. We were Northern people, induced to emigrate South—my father as a teacher. He sickened and died, leaving us without bread or shelter. Not long after my poor mother followed, and I lived on, the companion of the two children of my benefactor. The son, my foster-brother, fell fighting for the Southern cause; the daughter is here. You know her, Colonel.

Lacy. I know her. I worship her.

Amos. I see, and it is this seeing that makes me speak, Colonel. From the time that I joined your company till I lost my leg at Malvern Hill, you were very kind to me.

Lacy. You were too brave a lad—too good a soldier not to be loved.

Amos. I remember your tender nursing when I lay so long lingering between life and death. Colonel Lacy, there is but one being on earth I love better than you.

Lacy. Yes, Amos.

Amos. You won't laugh when I tell you. I, a poor mechanic and cripple, love Bessie Barr.

Lacy. Amos!

Amos. Love—I worship her! From my earliest boyhood till the present moment she has been, not my hope, but my star—my religion!

Lacy. You have told her this?

Amos. Never. I did not dream of telling. I dared not. She is so far above that it seems a crime to love her.

Lacy. Poor boy.

Amos. But I have watched over—I have cared for—I have guarded and helped her in my poor way. You see, when I came from the hospital, maimed for life, I found my good old benefactor reduced to the direst poverty. I managed to turn over to him, under pretense that it was an old Revolutionary claim being paid him, all my pension. Then, by grinding an organ on the corners of the streets and limping into cars to sell ballads, I managed to live until I learned a trade.

Lacy. What a life!

Amos. The thought of my dear old friend; the love of this sweet lady, kept me up. My trade once secured I felt independent. But I went on. You see these things about here, Colonel?

Lacy. The furniture?

Amos. I made them all, working out of hours, far into the night, that I might make them comfortable. There is not a chair or table but has had worked into it my love of her. The music of her sweet voice I seemed to hear; the holy beauty of her lovely face I seemed to see, cheered me on until I lost all sense of weariness, all want of sleep.

Lacy. She never knew of this?

Amos. Oh, Colonel, how could she? As well ask a bird to stoop and be companion to a clod; a star to leave its place for a home in a swamp. Save yourself, the secret goes down to be buried in my grave. I had to tell you I knew you loved her. I know that she loves you; that she is to be yours. God help me—and I come now to give her away as it were. You and I are not so wide apart. We have been comrades in the face of death. That makes us equal, if you were an officer and I only a private. Take her, Colonel. (*Rising.*) Be kind to her; I know you will. I go my poor way, now, without my star. I never had hope, but I go without light. It is dreary enough. But it must be. God bless you both!

BESSIE *rushes in.*

Bessie. Not so, Amos! You shall not go; or, if you do, take me with you!

Amos. Bessie, what do this mean?

Bessie. It means I love you. I did not know it until now. I heard you; I heard it all. Oh, Amos, take me!

Amos. (*Clasping her in his arms.*) Bessie, Colonel, is this a dream?

Lacy. Aye, my brave boy, and a dream to last through life! Take him, Bessie; he is worthy of you. Take her, Amos. You have won. (*Noise of a carriage heard without; loud knocking, and ringing of bell.*) And I have lost.

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

SCENE: Lacy Lodge, same as in Act II. Schack discovered with basket. Enter Amos and Lacy from house.

Lacy. Well, uncle Schack, how are you this morning, and how is the family?

Shack. Dey is well, sah; dat is, as fah as dey is up. Foh myself, sah, I'se a touch of rheumatiz.

Lacy. Sorry, Schack. Have you tried St. Jacob's Oil that I gave you?

Schack. Yes, sah. I tried dat spific; rubbed de saint in well, sah, an' wid prahers to the udder saints.

Lacy. Well, I hope with a good result.

Schack. Only temporary, sah; only temporary. While I' se arubbin' it is a mighty sight better, sah; but arter, de pains come back, bad as ever, sah.

Lacy. Why, that is too bad! Well, what can I do for you, Schack?

Schack. Well, dat's it, Colonel. I' se so bad wid de rheumatiz I raly aint able to walk to de village foh de fresh fish for the ole massa and de missus.

Lacy. Certainly, Uncle Schack; go to my cook and tell him that you are to have the fish and any thing else you may need.

Schack. Oh, tank you, sah. You's berry kind, an' sometime to-day, when I kin hobble to the village, I'll replace dem tings, sah; shu', sah. Good mornin' gentlemen.
(*Exit.*)

Lacy. Poor old Schack; true to the last. Well, Amos, we had rather an exciting scene last night. Have you any idea what brought the old gentleman home in such a hurry, and why he brought a police officer with him?

Amos. It is all a mystery to me. The officer let out something about an elopement, but Mr. Barr silenced him before I could learn what it meant.

Lacy. Ah, I understand. He came to prevent an elopement. I see the fine Italian hand of Madam in that. Well, well, she little knew that her precaution was useless.

Amos. What do you mean?

Lacy. What dreams are made of, nothing. Did the anxious father subside after I left?

Amos. Only to be aroused again when dear little Bessie informed him of her choice. I was treated to an iced shower bath, and did not resent it. It is hard, Colonel, for a proud old Virginian to bestow his only child on a mudsill, a greasy mechanic, as we are called down South.

Lacy. Never mind, Amos. That will come all right. Have you followed my directions?

Amos. To the letter.

Lacy. Written Mr. Barr that you have discovered the thief and can put him in possession of his lost millions?

Amos. I have.

Lacy. Asked him to meet you here?

Amos. I have.

Lacy. Telegraphed to the police headquarters for an officer?

Amos. I have. Now, Colonel, I have obeyed your orders as I was wont to obey them in camp and on the field. But may I not know something more of this business? I don't know why, but I feel strangely disquieted.

Lacy. Possess your soul in peace, my boy. I am putting you in a way to win your bride and a marriage portion of twenty-five thousand dollars, that being the amount offered for a recovery of the money.

Amos. But why not trust me with the details?

Lacy. It is not necessary, and I fear you will disarrange my plans. When the officer arrives and Mr. Barr is present, all you have to do is to order the arrest of the man I shall designate.

Amos. All right, sir.

Enter BANG.

Bang. Colonel. (*Saluting.*)

Lacy. Sergeant.

Bang. Female at headquarters, wishes to see Colonel.

Lacy. Request her to walk here.

Bang. All right, sir. (*Exit.*)

Enter HELEN.

Lacy. Well, my dear, to what am I indebted for this second visit.

Helen. Business, not pleasure, you may be sure. So you did not elope last night?

Lacy. Not so much as I expected to. My intentions were honorable, but there was a slip twixt cup and lip.

Helen. In the shape of an indignant father and the police?

Lacy. For which I am indebted to you.

Helen. Certainly, you defeated my elopement; I intervened in yours. Turn about, hubby, is only fair play.

Lacy. Learn, then, that your interference was not only uncalled for, but it came too late. At the last moment the little girl discovered that she loved some one better than your late husband, and so declined the match.

Helen. You lost the bride, and with the bride, the million.

Lacy. I lost both.

Helen. Why, hubby, you are not as fascinating as you once were.

Lacy. I believe not. And, before the day is out, I will be of so little value, that even you will not stoop to pick me up.

Helen. I don't know about that. But what is it you mean that is so desperate? Clip your whiskers? Wear your hair esthetically? Turn politician and be returned to Congress? Come, tell me. I am dying of anxiety to know.

Lacy. It is very simple. It means only that I throw up my hand. Abandon the contest in this attempt to hold on to another man's money, let the consequences be what they may. I have played and lost. I purpose paying like a gentleman.

Helen. Ned, I am amazed. I may say I am disgusted.

Why, what has come over you to bring about such a change?

Lacy. You won't understand me, Nell, but I may as well tell you. I never was fitted by nature or education for the *rôle* I have attempted. All this wealth; all my success in business; all this luxury with which I am surrounded, have failed to yield me a moment's enjoyment. There is a suicide called the suicide of crime that kills the soul and tortures the life left until life is hell. You don't understand this, of course.

Helen. Oh, bother your high talk! Drop that and drive on. I am interested.

Lacy. Well, life was bad enough; but when I came to know my victims, it became intolerable.

Helen. *Because* you loved this girl!

Lacy. No, not that altogether, though I do love her. But listen. If in my game for fortune, I had encountered the average lot—hard cheeked and harder hearted people—I could have nerved myself up to carry on my villainy. But, when I came to know these innocent and inoffensive people; to know that I was tramping the life out of this helpless old gentleman and his guileless daughter, I could not bear it. And when to this is added the fact you had coalesced with that scoundrel and I was to live by your joint consent, I concluded that life was not worth the living.

Helen. See here, my penitent friend. There is a part of your interesting confession that is not true.

Lacy. What part?

Helen. Wherein you say I coalesced with that scoundrel. I am doing business on my own account—no connection whatever with the house over the way.

Lacy. I have his word for it.

Helen. And his word is not worth a North Pacific bond.

Lacy. He expects to sustain his charges by appealing to your testimony.

Helen. I think he will be kept busy taking care of himself.

Enter BANG.

Bang. Colonel. (*Saluting.*)

Lacy. Sergeant.

Bang. Party answering to the name of Barr—Miss Hester and Miss Barr—are at headquarters asking for the Colonel.

Lacy. Say I will be in.

Bang. All right, Colonel. (*Exit.*)

Lacy. Excuse me, Nell.

Helen. Why, most cheerfully. Go to your fascination. (*LACY enters house. Enters BUCKTHORN cautiously.*) Well, my sweet-faced friend, are you here? Where are the officers?

Buckthorn. I came a train ahead that I might see you. Will he come to terms?

Helen. Not a term. He is busy this minute transferring all his property to the rightful owner—that old Virginian.

Buckthorn. The devil, he is! We must stop that somehow! You know when once we show our hands—

Helen. Very dirty hands!

Buckthorn. Our power is at an end. We make nothing.

Helen. I know—a blackmailer is like a bee—loses his sting in stinging.

Buckthorn. I dare not be seen talking to you. Would you mind stepping this way where we would not be observed?

Helen. Not the least; rather think my character would be imperiled by being seen with you. Lead the way. (*Exeunt.*)

Enter from house LACY and AMOS.

Lacy. (*Aside.*) And now I am as poor as I was five years since, poorer, for then I stooped to crime. Now, my dear fellow, for your part?

Amos. "My part," what is that, Colonel?

Lacy. In a few minutes, the police you have sum-

moned will be here, and it is your unpleasant duty to hand me over as the criminal.

Amos. To—. What do you mean for Heaven's sake? What does this mean?

Lacy. It means a melancholy fact. The man you loved, looked up to and so long obeyed is a common criminal. And it will be your duty to give me up.

Amos. My God. I—I give you up. I will not do it.

Lacy. What! not to gain an independence? Not to win the beautiful girl who loves you?

Amos. What? Turn on my comrade—the man who faced death with me, who has slept under my blanket and shared my food! Did you nurse me to make a traitor of me! And then to mention her! Damn it! I could kill you where you stand! What do you mean? You damned scoundrel, do you mean to insult me! Why do you do this?

Lacy. I meant, I meant (*after a pause*), I thought I was punished. You speak, my dear boy, as if I had a choice. I have none. The fates are closing my doom about me, and, even if I could, I would not escape.

Amos. And why? Oh, Colonel, reflect.

Lacy. Why? When the time comes that a man is to lose his self-respect and live by the consent of others, life is worthless. But I have no chance.

Amos. None?

Lacy. Two bloodhounds are on my track—one a male, the other a woman. One may kill, frighten or even pay off a male blackmailer. But a female blackmailer is as frantic in her malice as a scotched snake. She will sting herself to poison you.

Amos. But why select me for this horrid task?

Lacy. Amos, I did not mean to insult you, lad, I was only trying to do justice. It is my whim to gild my evil life with one good deed. You do me a favor, Amos. Now, stand firm, and, when the officers demand the criminal, point me out, and Bessie and the twenty-five thousand are yours. I think they are here.

Enter from the house, ELDER BARR, BESSIE and AUNT HESTER; from right, two police officers; left, HELEN.

Elder Barr. This is satisfactory so far as we have progressed. Now, for the thief.

Bessie. Aunt, we are not needed here.

Elder Barr. Yes, my daughter, I wish you to see the criminal who has wrought us such wrong.

First Officer. (To AMOS.) We are here on your summons. What are we to do?

Lacy. (To AMOS.) Rouse up man! Do your duty.

Enter BUCKTHORN.

Helen. You want the rascal? Well, here he is—Mr.

Wingait, *alias* Buckthorn, *alias* Beckwith. - Arrest him!
(*Officers lay hands on BUCKTHORN.*)

Elder Barr. What, my overseer! I suspected as much!

Buckthorn. None of this now. None of this. I am a witness.

Helen. Certainly you are; the best in the world. At least you were in Indiana. I can testify I saw you dig up the treasure and cart it off.

Buckthorn. This is an infernal conspiracy. You will see.

Helen. Certainly, we shall, when her gracious Majesty, the Queen of England, gets done with you.

First Officer. Henry Wingait, *alias* Buckthorn, *alias* Beckwith, I arrest you as an escaped convict from Australia.

Buckthorn. I throw up the sponge. You've got me. Move on. (*Exeunt officers with BUCKTHORN.*)

Amos. Thank God, I have escaped!

(*Lacy.*) (*To HELEN.*) Why Nell, you amaze me!

Helen. Of course, I do. No great compliment. It takes very little to maze your simple, sentimental soul.

Lacy. But how did you accomplish this?

Helen. Quite easily. When I first saw that villianous face, I knew—I felt it in me—that it had not been carried to this time of life without some deed that justified God's writing on his face. I hurried to police headquarters and asked to inspect the Rogue's Gallery. I found hundreds of weak faces and a few wicked ones of our native land. It

was not until I reached the distinguished foreigners that I found the photo of our friend.

Lacy. Well, you are as clever as you are good. I am in love with you. We will marry again.

Helen. Not necessary. Your decree of divorce is a forgery.

Lacy. Is it possible? (*To ELDER BARR.*) Mr. Barr, you owe your return to fortune to this brave fellow. Without him—and your daughter—I would have done nothing. He is one to cherish and love. You see Miss Bessie will second me in that.

Bessie. Yes, father, we are plighted.

Barr. What? give my only child to a mechanic?

Lacy. Never fear, Colonel. The shame of labor went down with slavery. The paper caps are coming to the front. They rule our country politically, now; ere long they will rule it socially.

Barr. Well, my children, you must determine, I suppose, for yourselves. An old man's head gives way to young folks' hearts. Be happy.

Lacy. And, Amos, avoid temptation and the Lord will save you from evil.

Helen. And remember, if you fall, it is never too late to mend. Be virtuous and you'll be happy. If there are any old saws from ancient copy-books you can think of, here is the place to put them in. If not, we will to breakfast, for I am as hungry as a wolf.

CURTAIN.

A KING'S LOVE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

EDWARD IV, King of England.
RICHARD, Duke of Gloucester.
LORD DE GREVILLE.
SIR MARMADUKE WOODVILLE.
CARDINAL ST. JOHN.
JOHN SHORE.
WHITHOLD, Court Jester.
MASTER MARTIN.
FRIAR BUNGAY, Court Astrologer.
JANE SHORE.
LADY ALICE.
MARGERY, Maid to Lady Alice.
Lords, Citizens, and Monks.

ACT I.

SCENE: Hall of JANE SHORE'S house in London, quaintly but plainly furnished. Glass doors back, opening on balcony, beyond which can be seen housetops covered with snow, with leafless branches of trees between. LADY ALICE and SIR MARMADUKE WOODVILLE discovered; LADY ALICE with book in her hand.

Sir Marmaduke. Upon my soul, fair dame, it seems
to me

A burning shame, that you should dim your eyes,

Such sweet eyes too, o'er musty books, when you
Should be at court, amid the courtly throng,
The fairest of them all. And now, confess,
Do not those little ears long, woman-like,
For lover's vows and courtier's flattery?

Lady Alice. I have such loving vows within this book,
Far sweeter than the love of selfish men,
Who flatter to deceive, Sir Marmaduke.

Sir Mar. By the mass, I thought those solemn books
Held naught but prayers and meditations.

Lady Alice. You do mistake; now listen while I read
One such. (*Reads.*)

When o'er the frosty plain and hill,
The feathery cloak of winter lies;
When from the north the winds blow chill,
And rain falls freezing from the skies,
We all do know, that 'neath the snow,
The tender violets 'gin to grow,
To bloom by brooks and woods along,
When frost and sleet and snow are gone.

When maiden's brow is pure and white,
And marble-like her bosom lies,
When naught of love may her delight,
And suitors meet but cold surprise,

'Neath rounded bosoms, white as snow,
Love's tender passion 'gins to glow,
To bloom on lips to lover's kiss
When life is love, and love is bliss.

Sir Mar. And those be books, small wonder, dame,
Our holy men are found so fond of them.

Lady Alice. Should read, Sir Marmaduke, and learn
a world,
Now dead to you, of strange delight, close hid
Between these somber covers.

Sir Mar. Me read! by our blessed lady, but I can't;
Nor cared I to till now. Gramercy, dame,
But I was trained to write my name in blows
On iron-potted heads, to stride a steed,
And hold a lance in rest. The books were left
To God's anointed younger brothers, dame,
Who, having scant inheritance below,
Seek, through their lore, for goodly things above.

Lady Alice. And more's the pity, gallant Sir; for see,
Some day a stronger arm in wrath will strike
Thine iron-potted head, and crack the skull
That can not read, beneath. Then thou wilt find
Thy younger brother taking precedence,
And something worse befall thee.

Sir Mar. Nay, nay, for I do pay the church her dues,

And never trust my skull in deadly fight
Till duly shrived. If Satan sieze me then,
Upon my heart I wear a relic, dame,
Blessed by His Holiness the Pope, you see,
That Satan feeling that will let me drop.

Lady Alice. Such course were wise in Satan. Strange
it is

That he who came to teach us peace on Earth,
Should have such following of fighting men.

Sir Mar. Yea, of a surety most strange it is;
For I do note that all these bloody wars
Receive the sanction of the holy church;
But yet I note a thing more strange, fair dame.

Lady Alice. And what be that, Sir Knight?

Sir Mar. I do observe that all these ladies fair,
Who shrink and shriek if they do see one drop
Of blood, will give their hands, and eke their hearts,
To wed the biggest butcher of us all.

Lady Alice. Most true, Sir Knight, for we, in truth,
are weak;

So weak of body, and I fear, of head,
We seek protection from the strong and brave.

Sir Mar. Would you could think me, lady, strong
and brave!

Lady Alice. That is your fair repute abroad, good
friend,

No man may question that and live at all.

What care you then for my poor thoughts?

Sir Mar. Bluntly, then, I'd make my heart and arm
Your strong protectors. Nay, hear me out,
As best I may, for I am rude of speech;
No courtier, lady, breathing silken words,
My voice was roughened to the roar of fights;
My hand made hard by brand and sword and lance,
Where man meets man to struggle unto death.
I love thee, Lady Alice—there, it's out!
I think of thee by day, Pardi! of nights;
I can not sleep for thinking of thee, dame.

Alice. It is not well, Sir Marmaduke, to speak
Me thus. Your words are insults in this house
Where I am ward of Mistress Shore.

Sir Mar. Be not so hasty, dame, but hear me out.
I offer thee my heart and hand and all I do possess.
Is it insult then to call thee wife—
My Lady Woodville?

Lady Alice. I do beseech, my friend, you pardon me,
That I mistook your wooing; I thank you now
For compliment so courtly. But I am
Far too young for so much honor.
I'm scarce fifteen, Sir Knight, and alas!
There lies between us two a grief so wide
No love may bridge it over.

Sir Mar. But if I find that bridge, sweetheart, will you Trust to my guidance and come over to me? What is this chasm that I can not see?

Lady Alice. They call me Lady Alice, and I'm told Am daughter of a knight who died in war Against his king, and so lost life and all. Before I can remember Mistress Shore Did make provision for me, And as a mother I have clung to her.

Sir Mar. Now, speak me fair and say you ill strive to love.

Lady Alice. Give me space to think.

(*Enter WHITHOLD unperceived.*)

Sir Mar. I ask no more; now bid me, love, to do Some desperate deed that I may prove my love.

Lady Alice. I have true proof in loving thee.

(*SIR MARMADUKE is about to kiss ALICE, when WHITHOLD drops his bauble between them.*)

Sir Mar. Knave, I have a mind to crack thy skull!

Whithold. A riddle—a riddle—why is that an empty threat?

Sir Mar. Go to. I have no mind for riddles!

Whithold. Which means he hath a mind—a mind to crack my skull. Now, lady, solve my riddle. Why was that an empty threat?

Lady Alice. For that it had no meaning, good Whithold, It was empty of intent.

Whithold. Fair, very fair, but not the thing—try again.

Lady Alice. Alas, I can not.

Whithold. Then learn, the threat was empty, for that the skull he would have cracked is empty. But give me thanks, I stopped thy dalliance, for the handsome Duke of Gloucester and the liberal Lord De Greville, but now dismounted at the portal and would have been an audience to your cooing.

Lady Alice. I take my leave, Sir Marmaduke.

Whithold. By my Lady, but you can not.

Lady Alice. And why not?

Whithold. Take your leave? Why all he has of mind and heart you carry with you. T'will not fatigue you much.

Lady Alice. Saucy knave, it were ill manners to say you lie.

(Exit LADY ALICE.)

Whithold. Since when hath it been ill mannered to lie with a lady?

Sir Mar. Look you, good jester, you may jibe these courtiers

As you will, but give me space, for I am quick at Blows, and brook no insult. Take my measure, knave.

Whithold. I did, Sir Knight, when the French count in

tournament last spring did hurl thee to the dust. Thou measurest five feet ten.

Sir Mar. Fool, the fault was in my steed.
Why comest here between me and my Lady Alice?

Whithold. Thy wit is halting as thy horse, brave knight.
Where find you lovers that folly comes not between?

Sir Mar. But you did lie. The Duke of Gloucester
Comes never to the house of Mistress Shore.

(*Enter DUKE and DE GREVILLE.*)

Whithold, Then thy eyes must fail thee as did thy
horse,
For see him here.

Duke. (*To pages.*) Say to Mistress Shore the Duke
of Gloucester

And the Lord de Greville are in waiting.

(*Exit PAGE. Exit SIR MARMADUKE.*)

De Greville. This is not to my liking, Duke.

Duke. There are few things, my lord, upon this earth
Fashioned to our liking; else we'd be
Content below, nor long for heaven.

De Greville. It shames me, duke, that I, a baron,
A peer of England, should come here to bow
Before a harlot, pleading for my rights.

Duke. Hush, hush, my lord, these walls have ears;
The trees about here bear the strangest fruit,
And many a tall fellow lies shorter

By a head for words less sharp than these.
The king, my brother, hedges in his rose
With ugliest sort of thorns.

De Greville. Time was when England's king was
hedged about

By noble hearts of barons brave—

(WHITHOLD *blows his penny whistle*; DE GREVILLE
starts.)

What's that?

Duke. (*Laughing.*) Naught, De Greville, but our
jester here,

Piping like a shepherd to a startled ram.

De Greville. He should be hanged.

Duke. Most likely.

De Greville. She lets us wait, that we may feel her
power.

S'cat, it angers me to see this beggar ride

Above her betters with such insolence.

I could cuff her now. (WHITHOLD *whistles again*;
GREVILLE *starts.*)

Duke. Nay, do the devil justice, good my lord,
There is no ostentation in the dame;
She might have titles, palaces, and lands—
Our majesty is liberal to his loves;
But she declined them all, and wisely so.
Unpainted power she prefers to shams

O'er gilded. Power is safe, and to the wise
As sweet, when least offensive. She remains
Plain Mistress Shore. And lo, these many years
Has governed England in her cunning way.

(*Aside.*) If I can strike her down I will,
For mine own better purpose.

De Greville. What can his majesty discover in
A thing so low and common as this woman
To fascinate and hold him? (*WHITHOLD whistles.*)

Duke. I cry you, mercy; but you do mistake,
As do the common herd who call her witch.
She's most uncommon, rest assured, my lord.
When first the king beheld her was when she
Stole to his presence in the hour of night,
To tell of Warwick's treason, and he saw
The fairest being God e'er set on end
To win the hearts of men. She saved his life,
And then his kingdom; for her graceful head,
Woman's as it is, and wondrous fair,
Holds well the brain of man. Hark, she comes.
Now press your suit. (*Aside.*) And get your knuckles
skinned,
You venerable ass.

(*Doors back are thrown open, and JANE SHORE appears
surrounded by suitors presenting petitions.*)

Jane Shore. I cry you, mercy, good my friends,

I can not hear you now; for see you not
His grace the Duke of Gloucester and with him
The Lord De Greville? Welcome to my house,
Your grace, and you, my lord. My poor place
Is honored by your presence.

Duke. I salute you, dame, and well it glads my heart
To see that Time, like all your friends, awaits
Tenderly upon you.

Jane Shore. A compliment, most courtly duke, and
now

What may I do to woo you here again?

Duke. The Lord De Greville seeks your favor to
His present suit, fair dame. He asks that you
Do use your influence with the king to grant
Him certain rights which he'll explain.

De Greville A very simple matter, dame. The courts
Do now deny me, and I ask the king
To grant me power to enforce the tax
For fish caught in the Thames and on the coast
Within my own domain.

Jane Shore. Master Martin, you but now did speak
me

Concerning this same right.

Martin. An' may it please your ladyship, I did.
These fishermen are poor—I speak for them;
If to the king's levy be added now the Greville tax,

As claimed, it will reduce them all to beggary,
And so destroy the trade.

Jane Shore. What say you, Lord De Greville?

De Greville. I claim my right, these knaves dare not
deny.

What is 't to me their starving? Let them starve.
I claim my right.

Jane Shore. But if they starve their fishing comes to
naught.

Where then your right?

De Greville. It is a lame excuse the dogs set up
To 'scape the payment of my honest dues.

Jane Shore. I fear not, my lord; I know the class
perhaps

Better than you, for I was of them once.

De Greville. And what are they to us—this rabble
That once wore iron rings about their necks
In token of their servitude?

Let them starve, I say. As we progress, God's wot,
They will dispute our titles next and seize
Upon our castles. We must tramp them down.

Jane Shore. God gave them stomachs, good, my
lord;

Same as a noble's stomach, strange to say. He gave
Them brain to think and beating hearts to love.
The cold does smite them as it does a lord;

The hot sun makes them sweat as sweats a lord.
And were they trampled down to death, my faith,
The lord would starve, for from their weary toil
Comes his white bread and all he does enjoy.

De Greville. Why this is monstrous, Mistress Shore ;
You do forget yourself.

Jane Shore. Nay, I remember but too well, my lord.
I beg your pardon, but you pray to one
Of those you do oppress. It is my shame
I'm not more worthy of their confidence.

De Greville. The shame's on our side
That England's nobles should be forced to sue.
Who doth confess herself unfit
Begs pardon of the rabble.

Jane Shore. Now have a care ; I may be all you say,
And yet your peer, my lord.
You can not seek my house with insult, sir,
E'en under cover of his grace the duke,
And 'scape the punishment due the man
Who offers insult to a woman anywhere.

(*Cries of "the king," "the king." The door thrown open.*
Enter EDWARD and suite.)

King. How now, my brother, Gloucester and De
Greville here,
Paying their court to Mistress Shore ?
Why, Mistress Shore, your comely face is flushed ?

Your eyes flash fire. What disturbs my friend?

Jane Shore. Your friendship, good my liege; that is
enough

To justify the insult that this lord
Seeks mine own house to offer me.

King. Now, by St. George! and have I sunk so low
My crown gives no protection to my friends?
Down, sir, down! and crave your pardon
Of Mistress Shore. Dost hear me, man?
But falter now an instant and thy neck
And lands shall answer.

(De Greville kneels and kisses the hand of JANE SHORE.)
Now, Mistress Shore, a few moments
Of thy cheer and company.

*(Exeunt KING, MISTRESS SHORE, and all save DUKE OF
GLOUCESTER, DE GREVILLE, and WHITHOLD. DE GRE-
VILLE remains kneeling, as if stunned.)*

Whithold. Let folly help thee up as folly threw thee
down.

De Greville. *(Rising.)* Out, fool.

Whithold. Nay, be not so hard upon thyself.

Duke. A sorry mess you've made of suing, man.
By St. Paul but the dame is sharp.
I never heard a tongue so like a knife;
She cut thee deep, De Greville.

De Greville. And I will be avenged.

What! a De Greville, and thus put upon
By a harlot, a beggarly shrew, a—

Duke. Hush, man—hush; you'd be hanged.

De Greville. Was it well, your grace, to lead me on
To such indignity? But I'll be avenged.

Duke. Peace, man;

'T was your ill temper that you stumbled o'er,
Not my advice. You should have spoke her fair.
Gad, smiting a tigress in her very den
Is no child's play.

De Greville. But I'll wring her neck. Vengeance!

Duke. I prithee, bark less,
That you may have a chance to bite.
You want revenge.

Ah! softly now, see where it comes
In your very hand, like to some simple bird,
That settles gently in a woodman's trap.

(*LADY ALICE crosses the stage in cloak and hood, prayer-book in hand.*)

Go you to mass, fair maid?

Lady Alice. Ay, to mass, your grace.

Duke. When angels pray they pray not for themselves,
For they are perfect; therefore, in thy prayers,
Fair angel, think of me, alack!
Ask pardon for my many sins.

Lady Alice. And were your life as happy as your speech

There were no need of prayers, my lord. (*Exit.*)

Duke. See you that damozelle?

De Greville. My eyes are not so dim but I can see
So plain a thing as that.

Duke. So plain! Go to. The fairest maid
In all the kingdom, and as shy as fair.

De Greville. It is the Lady Alice. What of her?

Duke. You look upon the heart of Mistress Shore,
Put your rough grasp on that and note
How Shore will writhe.

De Greville. Her pet, her plaything, her adopted maid!
Bah! There is no good in that.

Duke. Do not deceive yourself; she is no pet,
No child adopted. I have seen
Motherless women waste their affections
On dogs, on cats, on monkeys, or on birds,
But never yet upon a human being.
I have watched with care this Mistress Shore,
And read her inmost soul. The tigress softens
When that cub is near. Be that girl glad,
And Mistress Shore lights up like to a lantern;
But be she sad, and bright eyes darken then,
Till all the world can read the mother there.

De Greville. A daughter by the king?

Duke. Oh, no; some older love, I doubt.
But there's your coin of vantage, man
Seize her as hostage—hold her in your den
Till Shore capitulates, which soon she'll do.

De Greville. It shall be done, if in the doing, duke,
I die. I will have vengeance, duke—I will—
And swiftly, too. I kneel before the world
To such a thing as that! God's wounds!
I'll be avenged, though forty kings
Stood in my way! (*Exit.*)

Duke. Of all the fearful beasts that range the fields
The ass is one most dangerous—to himself.
He serves my purpose well, for I did woo
This dainty bit of maidenhood, and got
My wooing sent me back in scorn. Alack,
Next to my love I most enjoy my hate.
How England sickens of King Edward's reign;
A reign of slothful pleasures, that denies
Life to the nobles, while the commons wax
Most insolently fat. A spark may set
The realm aflame, and I—why I may find
Some fitter work than making silly love
To silly maids, who see no line of grace
In a crooked back, e'en when 't is carried by
His graceless grace the duke. (*Exit.*)

Enter JANE SHORE, SIR MARMADUKE, *and* WHITHOLD.

Jane Shore. What sayest thou, good Whithold?

Whithold. I come to offer thee my cap and bells; likewise my staff and all I do possess, as the biggest fool in all the land.

Jane Shore. And why, you jester?

Whithold. For thy folly that o'ershadowed mine—the purest folly, with no alloy of wit. Oh, take my place. You need the license of a fool for better protection to thy head.

Jane Shore. Surely thou hast resigned thy place,
For all this tirade hath no spice of wit.

Whithold. I had wit enough not to offend, as thou hast done, the ugliest noble of the realm. Guard well thy path, good Mistress Shore.

Sir Mar. When the fool ends, good dame, I fain would speak with thee concerning Lady Alice.

Jane Shore. And what of her?

(A cry heard without, then clash of arms, an alarm bell, and attendants rush on the stage.)

Jane Shore. What is the meaning of this tumult?

Whithold. *(Looking from window.)* De Greville's men-at-arms do carry off the Lady Alice from your very door.

Jane Shore. To her rescue! Hurry to the king!
Aid me, Sir Marmaduke. My poor pet;
My Alice—

Sir Mar. Leave the task to me; it is my right.
Look to your mistress.

(*JANE SHORE staggers back, as if to fall.*)

Jane Shore. Pay no heed to me; I need no aid;
Help my pet, my poor little pet.

(*Falls back in chair, as if fainting, as SIR MARMADUKE
exit hurriedly.*) CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE: Same as in 1st act. WHITHOLD and MARGERY discovered.

Whithold. Upon my bauble, Margery, but thou pleas-
est the eye! Thou art fair to look upon. By the mass,
but I believe thou art pleasant to handle and sweet to taste.

Margery. Go to, Master Whithold. You do make
game of me.

Whithold. Would I could make game of thee; then
would I capture thee, and eat thee. Better so, for the
lover that eateth not his mistress, lives to repent. Margery—

Margery. Master Whithold.

Whithold. Knowest thou why the giants eat their
virgins?

Margery. Marry, I know not.

Whithold. Marry! Thou answereth without wit. Thou
dost stumble on thy meaning—marry.

Margery. But why Master Whithold?

Whithold. She sayeth marry, and yet asks me why! Simple maid, sweet maid! Would I were a giant.

Margery. But make answer; I have much curiosity to know.

Whithold. The simple maiden, the sweet maiden hath curiosity. Yet is curiosity an evil. Curiosity did tempt Mother Eve to taste the forbidden fruit. Margery, would'st taste the forbidden fruit?

Margery. Go to. I ask thee why do giants eat their virgins?

Whithold. Then learn, oh simple maiden. The giants eat the virgins, fearing that if the virgins live to be shrewish wives they will eat the giants.

Margery. And yet thou wishest to be a giant.

Whithold. It was a silly wish; I fain would eat thee, for thou art sweet. But I have no fear. Giants are large of body and weak of mind. Prefer I to be small of body and large of mind. Margery, I would marry thee—make thee my shepherdess, and under the hawthorne tree, in the sweet summer time would we—

Margery. What, Master Whithold?

Whithold. Pipe to our silly sheep. Thus (*blows his penny whistle*)—

Margery. Pipest thou no better than that, Master Whithold, and the sheep would run from thee. Heigh, ho!

Whithold. Why sighest thou, simple maiden? It is no compliment to my powers of entertainment.

Margery. Alas, my good Mistress Alice was, thou knowest, seized upon and carried away but now by armed men.

Whithold. And, by the mass, the armed men will be only too glad to fetch her home again. Mistress Shore is angered, and the King is vexed. Rather would I find a pot of gold than be in the leather soles of these same men-at-arms, or their old miserly lord. Here comes Mistress Shore and our Lord Cardinal. Seek we the lord, the lawyer, or the doctor, when down and troubled—and at no other time. Come, sweet Margery. Beauty and Folly will retire together. (*Exeunt.*)

(*Enter JANE SHORE and CARDINAL ST. JOHN.*)

Jane Shore. 'T was good of you, Lord Cardinal to come So quickly to me in my dire distress.

St. John. 'T were yet more strange for me to hesitate. You would expect the priest—whom first you knew
A poor servant of the Church, upon the Thames,
Toiling where squalid poverty held reign,
Himself one scarce remove in wretchedness
From those he sought to teach—
You would expect, my friend, to have that priest
Come quickly to you when you called for him.

Why not the Cardinal, for to your aid
I owe my most unworthy elevation ?

Jane Shore. That's rank hypocrisy, my friend,
And all unworthy of you, for my aid
Were then of smallest value, e'en at court,
But for your learning, zeal, and eloquence ;
And well you have repaid my little help.
You won my soul from error. Ah ! you know
I was a Lorrilard, and oh, my friend,
This life were madness now, but for the hope
You hold before me of God's forgiveness.
Much as I love the King, and much this power,
Through which I do some charity, my days
Are days of sorrow, and my nights run through
In darkening horror and remorse.

St. John. You do not overestimate your sin.
God forbid that it I should condone.
Why suffer you at night, my child,
More than by day ?

Jane Shore. I do not know, but when the night comes
down,
And darkness woos to rest, I can not rest.
Sleeping or wide awake, my mind goes back
To that once happy home. I see, I hear
My noble husband—brave, kind-hearted John ;
I see the sunlight on the humble floor,

I hear the bird without, I feel the peace
That lives, be e'er the lot so hard, where life
Is innocence—for lo! within its cot
In roseate dreaming sleeps my little babe!
I took the sunlight from that happy home,
I took the warmth from out the pleasant hearth,
I left the door wide to desolation.
The house the wife should guard is home no more.

St. John. Your morbid fancy does exaggerate,
For, with your husband dead, the home is dead.

Jane Shore. I can not make him dead, though true it is
When banished from these shores, for that he was
A Lorrilard, for that same cause
He took up arms in France, and soon we heard
He died in battle; but I can not make him dead;
His living presence haunts me still the same.
In every breath I draw I feel him near;
I must give up this sort of life, or die.
I pray you, then, to use your influence with
His Majesty, the King; get his consent
To my withdrawing with my Alice now
To some far-distant convent, where to hide
Under another name, and so to pass
From memory of man, and sin and shame.

St. John. Your wish shall be my law, poor friend,
How fares your Alice? I do learn but now

The sinful old De Greville tore her away ;
And from your very portal, as she came
From mass.

Jane Shore. Too true, but the brave Woodville rescues her

Within the hour.

(*Cries of "The King." Doors thrown open. Enter EDWARD.*)

He is here! Oh! press him now.

King. You sent a hasty summons, Jane.

Our Cardinal here!—well met, your grace.

The news we get from Rome, but now,

Is far from pleasant, for it says

His Holiness the Pope favors

Our enemies of France.

St. John. I feared as much.

King. You feared as much! Now, by God's wounds,

We thought to have a Cardinal

Whose power at Rome would serve us well,

In matters such as these.

St. John. Your majesty would have me speak

Frankly in presence of your minister,

Mistress Shore?

King. Since when has this outspoken grace

Grown so modest? Out with it man,

Let insult have full sway. Our minister,

Good Mistress Shore—forsooth! 'T is rather bold
To gather up the scandal of the court
And hurl it in our teeth. 'T is well, your grace,
Your priestly petticoats protect you.

St. John. And is it well for one so great,
So wise and brave as Edward King,
The first unquestioned King of England,
And that through his own prowess, thus to shrink from
And grow offended at the truth,
When uttered by a friend?
For he alone is brave, who dares to face—
And face it calmly—an unpleasant truth.

King. I beg your pardon—I was vexed;
Then tell me plainly as you will,
What is the ill that shadows us at Rome?

St. John. 'T is feared you've lost your zeal, my liege,
For holy church. You have, of late,
Pardoned those wicked heretics,
The Lorrilards, and it is known at Rome—
A truth I may not contradict—
The influence that brought this ill about,
Is sinful in itself, a scandal too,
His Holiness may not favor.

King. Now, by my crown, I swear—

Jane Shore. My liege—Edward—My King—hear
me!

This good man speaks the truth ;
I pray you patiently to weigh his words,
For there is wisdom in them—nay, my King,
Behind them lie grave dangers to your state ;
I see them gathering, dark and ominous.

King. I am Edward Plantagenet and have no fear ;
For that I have no fear am I a king—
The first unquestioned King of England,
As thou sayest truly. You seek to come
Between me and my love. She saved my life
And risked her own, when friends were few, your grace,
And slow to act. To her wise head I owe
Since then, the quiet of my reign. Go now,
And tell his holiness, the Pope, that she
Is Queen—my Queen—and here I do defy
France, Spain, and Burgundy combined,
And I will see this England wet with blood
Before I brook such insult as this act
Of insolent interference.

(CARDINAL moves as if to leave.)

Jane Shore. Stay, your grace.
Is this the recompense, my King,
For my poor love and service? Think—
You do not put yourself, but me, in front
To meet the scorn, the biting scorn, the wrath
Of all the world, and I am but a woman ;

No king for men to fear, but weak and helpless.
Ah! good, my King, let me go hence
To some obscure retreat, where I may pray
Forgiveness for my sins, and heaven's aid
For you. 'T is for your good, and oh, my King,
For mine, for I am sick at heart
And weary of this strife; I can not, dare not
Bear it more.

St. John. My liege, I take my leave. You have, oh,
King,

In this fair friend, the wisest counsellor,
And in this last request the crown
Of all her good advice. (*Exit.*)

King. You weary of me, Jane?

Jane Shore. Ah! No, my King, I weary of the load
That I have carried, lo these many years.

King. A load—What load?

Jane Shore. Of sin and shame.

King. Is it not brightened by my love? For thine
Would I commit much sin, my Jane.
Nay, do I not carry much the larger part?
My spouse, Elizabeth, and her pious friends
Leave me scant peace of mind, or rest
Of body either. You have no husband
To snarl and carp, and so to make the home
More dismal than it was.

Jane Shore. So long as I could serve you by my love,
My love was at your service. Now 't is changed.
I am a burden. Your enemies
Wax strong and insolent, and all
Because of our relation. Ah! let me go,
My King.

King. Yes, for a little while, we will deceive
The knaves, and have it widely blown about,
That you have taken refuge in a convent, Jane.
Ah! as I rode hither, my good brother,
The Duke of Gloucester, in De Greville's half,
Asked me the hand of Alice, for it seems
The miser is infatuated with the maid,
That he, like to another Pluto, carried off.

Jane Shore. Edward, my master, you will give denial
To this monstrous thing.

King. And why should I refuse? The girl's in luck;
My Lord De Greville is old and miserly.
Avarice has made him rich, old age, i' faith,
Leaves him scant time to hoard his gains, and then
He'll leave the wench a widow—handsome, young,
And merry too—for some gallant to love.

Jane Shore. Edward, my King, have I asked much of
you,
In all these years of loving servitude?

King. Asked naught, my Jane. You might have had

For asking, titles, wealth, and station ;
But you put these away, remaining here
Plain Mistress Shore.

Jane Shore. And then, at last, I ask a little thing—
Give me my Alice.

King. Against the girl's own good ? Now, sweetheart,
pause !

There is not a daughter of the noblest house
In all the land, but would accept
And think herself most fortunate.
He's rich and noble—short of life—
A few years and the wife's a widow, puss.

Jane Shore. Each year an age of torture ;
Each year an age of degradation and abuse.
We sell to servitude her bloom of youth ;
We bargain off her innocence,
Her loving trust in human life,
And think to recompense in gold
The loss of all that makes our life so precious.

King. God's wot, but this is troublesome ! Why, Jane,
I did offend this baron grievously,
When I made him to kneel before the grinning court
And humbly sue for pardon at your feet.
There's discontent throughout the land,
It simmers to a boil. One flash the more
May set the cauldron boiling,

When Warwick fell, the brain went out,
But left the life, and fangs, and poison.
These Barons are not wise, but well they know
That instigated by the Church at Rome,
All Europe gathers to a bloody war with us.
I must be prudent, and my little minister
Will not throw troubles in my way.
I must appease De Greville.

Jane Shore. Ah, Edward, my loved King, you do not
know

The sacrifice you ask? I'll go my ways,
Give all that's left of life to solitude
And prayers—but leave me Alice;
Good my King—

(*Noise without—Enter SIR MARMADUKE and ALICE.*)

Sir Mar. Mistress Shore, I here restore your ward,
All safe and well—a little ruffled, dame,
As a poor bird would be that but escapes
An ugly beak and claw. Your majesty.

King. Now man, who made thee sheriff, and gave
thee

The right to interfere in this?

Sir Mar. Your Majesty, when on the field
Of Gladsmoor, sire, you dubbed me knight,
And made it my duty to protect the weak,
And, wherever found, attack the wrong.

Pardon, your majesty, when we possessed
 With little trouble Lord De Greville's house,
 I caught the man escaping with these papers.
 I choked them from him, for he seemed to care
 More for the papers than the maid.
 My fair betrothed tells me, for she reads,
 These be of grave importance to your majesty. (*Gives
 papers.*)

Jane Shore (embracing Alice).

My little one—my precious—and cruel men
 Would take thee from me.

Lady Alice. Right glad was I, dear mistress, to escape.
 I feared no one would dare to rescue me.
 But there is treason in that gloomy house;
 The Duke of Gloucester—

Jane Shore. Hush! my child.

King. (*To Marmaduke and Alice.*) Give me leave, I
 have a word

With Mistress Shore. (*Sir Marmaduke and Alice exeunt.*)
 This treason is more forward than I thought.
 Here is a letter from our enemy of France,
 And here's a list of traitors covering all the land,
 And here a compact duly signed.
 De Greville knows I have these. While I speak
 Doubtless the horde is rising. Well for us
 We got such timely warning.

Jane Shore. De Greville should not know you are advised.

Send Hastings to him quickly to consider his request
As if no papers ever reached your hand.
Then to the Tower speedily consign the men
This compact names.

King. Wise little head, you counsel well.
If we are not too late—

(Enter from balcony JOHN SHORE.)

What means this bold intrusion?

John Shore. That is a question, King, I well might ask,
If, in the fiction of the law, a wife
Remains a husband's property, his home
A castle.

King. Who are you, man, that like a thief
You steal over the wall into our presence?

John Shore. Your guard denied me entrance at the
door,
So I made bold to climb the wall, my liege.
And for my rough intrusion here, I beg
Pardon of your majesty.

King. Who are you, man? What is your will?

John Shore. Ask that woman.

Jane Shore. I do not know him, sire.

John Shore. And have my whitened locks and sunken
eyes,

My cheeks so channeled by my bitter tears,
My form so bent by load of misery,
Have these so altered me you know me not?
My liege, I am a hated Lorrillard
But lately pardoned, and to the scorn of men
I'm known as Shore—John Shore—
The husband of a wife used by the King.

King. And do you seek that wife, old man?

John Shore. Nay, my liege. That wife to me is dead.
She has been dead to me these many years.
I want no rotting corpse to call my wife,
For God dissolves the marriage tie in death.
Death enters with corruption. My wife is dead.

King. What do you seek here then?

John Shore. I come to claim my child, my Alice.
Her I would take from out this charnel house
To my poor home. A dreary place, O King,
And desolate, but pure.

King. Why, mistress, how is this? His child your
child?

Jane Shore. He speaks but truth, my liege. I could
not bear
My child should know her mother as she is,
I brought her up in ignorance of my right
But not my love. The father hath the better claim.

I pray you leave to us this woeful scene
Of settlement.

King. That as you will, for on my soul
I have work enough on hand. Adieu. (*Exit.*)

Jane Shore. I beg you, sir, to stand apart
But for a little space, that I may say some words
To this dear child, who needs persuasion, sir,
To make her leave me.

John Shore. Be brief. Your words are poison to her.
Your very presence is a taint.

Jane Shore. I know 't is so and humbly crave consent.
(*She goes up the stage—she calls Alice—enter Alice.*)
My child, here's one who comes to us as from the dead,
Who has the right to take you from me.

Lady Alice. Sir Marmaduke?

Jane Shore. No, my poor girl—more potent than a
lover.

One heaven made your guardian in your birth;
Your parent, child.

Lady Alice. Never have I known but one to love,
Who, loving me with tender, patient care,
Has made me all her own.

(*Seeks to embrace her. JANE SHORE restrains her.*)

Jane Shore. You make my test too hard. Be patient
child,
And hear me out. It is my wish—nay, more,

'Tis my command—that you should go
With this good gentleman, who has a claim
Far better, higher than mine own. (*Aside.*) For when
I ceased

To be a wife, I ceased to be a mother.

Lady Alice. Madam, I do not comprehend.

Jane Shore. Ah! may you never know the anguish of
the knowing.

I must be brief or fail. When you were but a babe
It was decreed that children of the heretics
Should be taken from their parents and reared
Within the bosom of the mother Church.
To save you from that fate, your mother, child,
Did give you to a friend, a Catholic friend.
In all the cruel ills that followed them,
Robbed, banished, and abused, the scorn of men,
The wrath of government, and the cruel persecutions
Of an outraged church, the parents knew
That you were safe, and took comfort in the knowledge.
It was long after when I found you, child,
And took you to my home and heart,
To see you grow to womanhood,
Pure amid impurity. I took you up an angel,
And an angel now I give you to your father.

Lady Alice. Ah! do not send me from you. I do
know

But one to love. You are to me a mother—
My mother. (*Embraces her.*)

Jane Shore. My child! my child! Ah me! but this is hard.
In parting with you I do part with life,
And all is dark before me. Go, my child,
And put your cloak about you, for 't is cold—
Ah! bitter cold—without.

(*Exit LADY ALICE. During this scene JOHN SHORE gradually draws near.*)

John Shore. I never thought to call you by that name
Made sacred by the Lord. But he forgives,
Why should I not forgive? Jane, come to me.
We will forget the past. My home is poor
And humble, yet it is a home. There you
In penance, and we both in prayer, may find
Forgiveness for the guilty past.

Jane Shore. Ah! no, my friend, it may not be.
For I have lived in peace with her
For that she did not know me. Now
To stand by my mine own hearth, and feel
The horrors of a tainted mother, feel
The pitying anguish of her loving heart,
To have you suffer all the scorn of men
Because like Christ you could forgive
An erring wife—ah! no. The torture were too great.
I can not—I can not.

John Shore. You bear the cross, yet shrink in meanest fear
From the great sacrifice through which to win
Forgiveness of your loathsome guilt. Live on,
Live on in guilded rottenness.

Jane Shore. Do not curse me, John.

John Shore. Christ said, let him without sin cast
The first stone. I without sin do cast
These stones at thee,
Thou tainted mother and adulterous wife,
Thou whited sepulcher, thou living lie!

Jane Shore. Oh! mercy, John. Have mercy.

John Shore. The mercy that thou gavest me
I do return with interest.
By the blighted hearthstone and the ruined home,
I lift my voice to God and pray for vengeance.
When thine awful hour comes, as come it must,
May all my blasted years of bitterness and shame,
May the long, slow agony of a broken heart,
Be crowded into seconds of thy dying life.
By God forgotten, may thy hell-haunted soul
Sink hopeless in thy agony.

Jane Shore (who has sunk to the floor during this curse rises wearily.) 'T were better you had left me
dead.

Your words are blows that stun, and that is all.

You have no curse more awful than my conscience,
No doom more dreadful than to be myself.
When your life was spared, my fate was sealed.
My sin has found me ere I did confess my sin
And got forgiveness in repentance. Now
Shall I hear ringing in my hollow ears,
Too late, too late, forever.

John Shore. Amen, amen, amen.

Jane Shore. You should have spared your imprecations,

For they will settle on your own unhappy head.
Vengeance is mine, sayeth the Lord,
The blows you strike reach to your heart,
For we are one whatever fate betide,
And from this out, the pale affrighted face
Of her you love will haunt you till you die.
She will walk with you in your walks,
Sit at your board, sleep in your bed,
And the poor face in pitiful appeal
Will cause your heart more anguish
Than your wrath.

(*Enter LADY ALICE in cloak and hood.*)

Ah! this is bitter, my child.

Lady Alice. My mother! (*They embrace.* JOHN SHORE madly tears LADY ALICE away and drags her to the door.)

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE: Banqueting hall in house of JANE SHORE; a table spread as for a feast. On the right a smaller table with silver pitcher and two goblets. Deep recesses or arched ways on both sides. WHITHOLD and MARGERY discovered.

Margery. What say you, Master Whithold?

Whithold. That the government sups here to-night.

Margery. By my troth, but it is a small supper for so large a body.

Whithold. The government, Margery, stands six feet two in its stockings, and is well proportioned.

Margery. You mean His Majesty the King?

Whithold. His Majesty the King, since the death of Warwick, King Maker, is the government of England.

Margery. I do see thy meaning.

Whithold. Much praise to thy feminine sagacity; and yet, if thou seest my meaning, it is more than I see. For if the truth could be told, without getting the truth in the stocks, the government of England is not his most sacred Majesty, but her most pleasing grace, Mistress Shore.

Margery. So it is said; and yet she has not power to retain sweet Lady Alice, who is gone from us this day.

Whithold. And, is it true, fair Margery, the supposed dead heretic, John Shore, took her home?

Margery. Aye, good Master Whithold, and with much weeping. And Sir Marmaduke was much angered; while Mistress Shore is as pale as my smock.

Whithold. Pale as thy smock, good Margery, is well said. Faith now, can I see Mistress Shore's very paleness. And the King, Margery, sups here to-night, and Lord De Greville to conclude differences, doth furnish the entertainment, Margery.

Margery. Master Whithold.

Whithold. Were I Mistress Shore, I should not care to eat Lord De Greville's viands, nor drink of his wine. Beware of the enemy bearing gifts. Thus did the Greeks give to the Trojans a wooden horse, and the wooden horse gave birth to armed men, that did burn and kill.

Margery. A most scurvy trick.

Whithold. A joke on the Trojans. Give Mistress Shore a hint to neither eat nor drink. If the Lord De Greville, who holdeth so fast to a coin that the coin doth cry out, cares to poison the government of England, good Margery, let him have his will; but I would fain see your mistress escape acquaintance with that dame, we all know too well, called Misfortune.

Margery. That I will; for let the world say what it may, she is a good, kind mistress.

Whithold. Misfortune?

Margery. No, indeed; Mistress Shore. But you are sad to-day, good Master Whithold.

Whithold. Yea, verily; I am down as a chicken-cock on a damp day, as full of spleen as a sick dog, and as suspicious and irritable as a jealous wife. Now could I prophesy evils to the land, of sudden deaths, civil disorders, and great wars. Now harken—

When friars fat rich food deny;
When lordly bishops drink no wine;
When merchant's wives alone do lie;
And Hebrews eat forbidden swine;
When misers give the poor their gold;
When honest men are put in place;
And when to maidens truths are told;
When lovers lie not to the face;
When bakers give to bread its weight;
When tapsters water not good drink;
When honor serves the king and state;
When women tell us all they think;
When thieves no longer purses steal;
When robber turns to saintly priest;
When honest traders honest deal;
When modest worth is not the least;
When mothers truly see their young;
When widows plan not to deceive;

When scandal holds its busy tongue ;

Then will good people cease to grieve.—

And let the final prayer be said ;

For, on my soul, the devil's dead. Amen.

(*Enter FRIAR BUNGAY.*)

(*To Margery aside.*) Here is one, good Margery, who will make us sport—Friar Bungay, the court astrologer. Good even to you, Father Bungay—an' thou readest the stars.

Bungay. Yes, lively Master Whithold. It is given to me to read the stars, and in them the destiny of men.

Whithold. And many a wise astrologer, who reads the stars, falleth most scurvily in a ditch.

Bungay. He who reads the stars falls not, merry Master Whithold.

Whithold. Seeth he the ditch in the stars ?

Bungay. Of a verity, my son.

Whithold. Then are the heavens ditched ? Most vile heaven that hath bogs in it.

Bungay. You take not my meaning.

Whithold. I will take any thing of thee, friar, but thy blessing and thy drugs.

Bungay. Yet have I cured many sick.

Whithold. Of a truth ; for the dead are cured of their disorders.

Bungay. Go to, go to. I would have thee grave.

Whithold. Go to my grave? Thanks, friar; it serves my purpose best to remain alive. Friar, art thou versed in palmistry? Canst thou read in the lines of the hand the future, good father?

Bungay. Yea, verily. That is not so deep an art as the language of the stars.

Whithold. Look, then, upon my hand, good Friar Bungay, and see if thou findest a rope or a rich widow.

Bungay. Give me your hand, merry master, and I will make effort to find short shrift or fair widow. (*WHITHOLD passes MARGERY'S arm under his right, and presents her hand to the friar.*) Nay, good Whithold, court jester to the king; but thy hand is soft and fair as that of a woman, and it hath strange lines. The line of love is much broken: as if thou hast been deceiving and deceived, good jester; jilted and jilting, my jester. (*MARGERY struggles, but WHITHOLD holds her*); and I see a child, but never a father. I find no rope, nor yet a widow; but, my soul to heaven, Master Whithold, that is strange—thou wilt die in childbed.

(*MARGERY breaks away and assaults FRIAR BUNGAY. She knocks off his tall hat, glasses, and wig, showing him to be far younger than he appeared.*)

Whithold. A miracle, a miracle! Fàther Bungay, thou art restored to thy youth by the quick hand of the little witch.

Bungay. A pest on thy pranks. I'll have thee hanged, Master Whithold; and, as for you, mistress, there be stocks in the pillory for thy heels.

Whithold. Come, Margery—come, fair Margery; thou art a greater witch than he a wizard. He did father thy child, but thou didst restore his youth.

(*Exit WHITHOLD, with MARGERY. FRIAR BUNGAY re-arranges his dress.*)

Bungay. If a man hath trouble come to him, let him be assured a woman fetches it, or a woman sends it. Since the day the first woman listened to the serpent, and set Adam to robbing an orchard, she hath been possessed of the devil, and brings naught to innocent man, such as I, but mischief.

(*Enter DE GREVILLE.*)

De Greville. Art here! 'Tis well. Now, listen, man:

This strumpet, Shore, hath all our secrets,
And thou, who read'st the stars, must learn of me.
She holds a halter for thy neck, an ax for mine,
And death to nearly all that's left
Of England's barons.

Bungay. Then, my lord, we better get out of this.

De Greville. Tush, man. She hath not yet revealed the plot;

But holds our papers, like a cunning witch,
Suspended o'er our heads.

Bungay. What, then, my lord?

De Greville. Death, friar; death. The dead reveal
no plots.

Hearken! The king sups here to-night.

He hath invited us, which proves

He knows not yet of our intent.

It is his wont, at parting with the witch,

To pledge her health in wine. Her cup

Must hold that poison you have brewed,

That works so deadly sudden and

Leaves no trace behind. See, friar,

To thy hand—there are the goblets and

The wine. See that thou failest not;

Or, if you do, your neck's not worth the hemp.

Bungay. Never fear, my lord. I live to do your
bidding.

De Greville. And die if you but fail. Now go—

(*Exit BUNGAY. Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH, disguised.*)

Whom have we here?

Queen. You may well ask, De Greville. (*Showing
her face.*)

De Greville. The Queen, and in this house and guise?

Queen. Yes; and from this house I do not go,
'Til I have seen this witch. De Greville,

I fain would look upon the power
That lives so strangely twixt my lord, and me,
His lawful wife.

De Greville. But the King comes here anon.

Queen. Aye! aye! anon, and none too seldom, man.
I will find the secret of this witchery
That shames our court. What is the power
That wins a king such as our Edward was?

Enter JANE SHORE.

Jane Shore. Good even, Lord De Greville. You are
kind

To pass so soon our ugly differences.

Whom have we here?

De Greville. A city dame, good mistress, who would
speak,

She tells me, with you alone.

For that I take my leave a little space. (*Exit.*)

Jane Shore. I'm at your service, dame—what may I do
To aid you?

Queen. Madam 't is said of you—among
Our humble city folk—you do possess
Strange and mysterious power over the hearts
Of men. That by some subtle charm or drug
You win all minds to do your will,
And be most happy in the doing.

Jane Shore. In other words, I am a witch?

Queen. Even so. And as I am unfortunate,
Most unfortunate, I make so bold
To ask your aid, if you may give it me.

Jane Shore. I fear you overestimate my power.
What is the ill you suffer, dame?

Queen. I have a husband who did love me once,
Loved me so well he brought great trouble
To himself—for I was low of birth,
And, lifting me to share his high estate,
He periled all he had. And now
He cares naught for me—nay, 't is worse,
He gives that to another I should have,
And leaves me to mourn alone.

Jane Shore. Alas! poor dame, the ill you grieve
Is common to our race. When we may find
Means to prevent the fever, stop the plague,
Control e'en death itself, we may escape
This sickness with the rest.

Queen. You speak as one who never suffered—who
Never outwatched the stars, with hungry heart,
Listening for steps that never came,
Or coming, brought more sorrow in their tread
Than tears of solitude and shame.
You can not know the anguish of the heart
That longs for love once had, yet has no more.

Jane Shore. The ill each suffers from is life's great ill,

One's grief is measured by no other grief,
Selfish, unreasoning sorrow can not see
The agony of others. Doubtless, now,
Good dame, you'd punish sorely
The object of your faithless husband's love.

Queen. Marry would I.

Jane Shore. And yet she did not seek his love,
Nor track him down, nor lie in wait,
Nor beg, nor plead, nor threaten—worst of all
She never sought to win him by the words
Made dangerous in their sympathy.
And yet what punishment is hers :
She knows the day must come when she
Will suffer like desertion, and the while
A sense of guilty degradation weighs her down.
The love man gives his wife looks up,
Half love, half adoration, while
His guilty love looks down, and like
The sun's bright rays when intercepted,
They turn to shadows e'er they touch the earth.

Queen. Faith, Mistress Shore, to hear you plead
One would suspect some truth were told
In stories from the court.

Jane Shore. It is not well, good dame, to seek my aid
And stab me with your scorn—and yet I know
Grief makes us all unjust. I pardon you,

And heaven knows if there be one
Whom I have wronged, upon my knees
I'd beg forgiveness.

Queen. What of the Queen?

Jane Shore. Not of the Queen, but of the wife,
Men make their Queens, but God alone
Doth crown the wife—she sits a sovereign in
The peaceful home—her throne the heart of him
She calls her lord, her subjects her sweet babes,
Her scepter the humility of love,
That sways by softest yielding.

Queen. And such a home was mine until this wretch
Did come between my lord and me. And now
I promise you, if e'er she falls
Within my grasp, I'll be as hard
And cold and pitiless as the axe itself.

Jane Shore. And suffer retribution for the wrong you
do;
Leave vengeance to the Lord, who cares for all,
And brooks no interference.

Queen. And have you then no charm—no subtle drug
That I may use to win him back again?

Jane Shore. You strangely move me, dame, I fain
would try
To aid you if I could. Hold, here's a charm
To me most precious, for it was a mother's gift,

(Taking amulet from her bosom.)

And I have worn it ever next my heart.
Do you so wear it, and when your lord
After long absence doth return again
Then press it to your breast, 't will give you strength
To greet him kindly. This, good dame,
Gives potent force to this most subtle charm
That is destroyed by sullen looks
And ugly words.

And, now, good e'en to you;
When next we meet I trust your ill
Will all have passed.

Queen. (Going and aside.) When next we meet, when
next we meet,
The witch hath put a spell on me,
I'm in a daze, and not myself.

(The KING enters, and the QUEEN hastily muffling her face makes hurried exit.)

King. Who was it, Jane, that hurried hence
In such unseemly way. As she did pass
I caught a gleam fierce as a tigress,
And shot like lightning at me from her eyes.

Jane Shore. Naught but a city dame, poor thing.
She came to me for spell or drug
To win her truant husband back again.

King. These women nurse their little sorrows till

They swell to mountains in their own esteem.
A city wife, forsooth, and she hath griefs
Like to a Queen. Well, wisest little friend,
We have invited the conspirators,
At least all those that we could reach,
With pleasant invitation, here to sup
With us to night. They little dream
The entertainment that awaits them.

Jane Shore. Is it not strange, my liege, that one at
least—

That one De Greville—does not e'en suspect
The storm that's brewing. He must surely know
You have his tell-tale papers.

King. Not so, my Jane, for from a spy I learn
He thinks you hold this damning proof
In terror o'er their heads.

(Enter DE GREVILLE and sundry other lords.)

Welcome, good friends, most welcome here.
Why, De Greville, this is kind indeed,
You are a Christian man to thus forgive
And put my faith to blush—the smitten cheek
Is turned, that on the other side
Good Mistress Shore may kiss, not smite,
And no Judas kiss, my lord.

De Greville. Your jest my liege, hath in it
Something of a sting.

King. Tush, man—'t is but a jest, a sorry jest.
Come, good my lords, now gather round the board;
You are most welcome.

(They seat themselves, and as they do so, a monk, in gown and cowl, coming from the arched ways on each side, places himself behind each guest, while the tramp of troops is heard without.)

King. Before you, gentlemen, is the feast
Prepared by our De Greville; behind,
Is service of our own. *(They rise.)*
Nay, keep your seats, it will be long
Ere you may sup again. The ancients, lords,
Were wont to have at banquets such as this
A grinning, eyeless skull, which said—
Laugh and be merry, for to-morrow death.
You start; this is not well, for you, my lords,
Do hold in trust the honor of old England.
To your wise heads and patriotic hearts
We look for aid and comfort at all times.
And it were ill for us for you to fail,
Now that our enemies combine to do us ill.
Lord Anthony of Scales, our kinsman too,
In whose behalf we periled once our crown,
May we not trust in you? Lord Dorset, too,
Another kinsman we have favored much.
Lord Willoughby, we spared your wide domain,
When, through your father's treason, it was lost.

John Ratcliffe, you did us service once,
And by that token should be true as steel.
And the wise and rich De Greville here.
Why these are friends we have to sup with us;
You should be joyous, yet you look disturbed.
And can it be we are in error, lords;
Are your strange looks but mirrors of your hearts?
Are we surrounded here to-night by foes,
Not friends? We heard as much. A little bird
Did whisper in our ears broad discontent
Was on the land, for that we favors cast
On a poor lady, who, unlike you all,
Had served with zeal the crown, nor asked reward
For her rare service. Yet to-night you see
We treat such whispers as vile slanders.
You do not eat nor drink. Why is it, friends,
You treat with such discourtesy our feast?

De Greville. We hope, my liege, after this mask is o'er
To eat with better appetites. (*Murmurs about the table.*)

King. After this mask is o'er we fear, good friends,
You'll have small need of appetites.

De Greville. Now come we to the point. Good my liege,
We all are gentlemen. Whether we live or die,
We have a right to treatment fitting such. (*Murmurs.*)

King. Gramercy man, but you are hard to please!
Who talks of dying at a feast like this?

You all are honorable, sirs, of course,
And this a feast in which to harmonize.
Then fill your glasses, bumpers all, we drink
To our fair hostess. Fetch here our wine.

*(During this speech FRIAR BUNGAY steals in, poisons one
of the goblets, that WHITHOLD, watching him, changes.)*

Knaves, why do ye loiter? Our wine, at once.

(BUNGAY seizes the goblet and gives it to the KING.)

What, our astrologer turned a Ganymede?

This is a jest indeed! Why gentlemen,

You will not pledge; then, Mistress Shore, drink we—

Safe journey to the tower, and the block

And comfort to them in the land beyond. *(Drinks.)*

Tush, loving subjects, in our hands we hold

Proof enough of treason to behead

A thousand such as you. *(After a pause.)*

Say to my brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester,

His prisoners are ready. *(Staggers, and clutches at the nearest monk.)*

I am not well; I pray you bear me hence.

What pain is this that clutches at my heart

And blinds my sight? Gently, gently, friends. *(They bear him out.)*

Bungay. (Aside to DE GREVILLE.) The jester, Whit-
hold changed the cups—

The king hath not an hour to live.

De Greville. 'T's just as well. In Gloucester's hands
Our heads are more secure.

(To the company.) His Majesty is sick nigh unto death,
And in the name of Richard, Duke of Gloucester,
I do arrest Jane Shore. I call on you,
My lords, to aid me in my duty.

(They gather hurriedly about JANE SHORE.)

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

SCENE: Westminster. JANE SHORE, SIR MARMADUKE
WOODVILLE, her advocate and guard, discovered.

Sir Marmaduke. The papers that I seized and gave
the King
Held damning proof, you say, of plots against
His Majesty, now dead?

Jane Shore. So the king did say to me,
And after charged it on the lords
Assembled at the supper in my house.

Sir Mar. And what became of them?

Jane Shore. Alas! I do not know. My liege
Did take them with him; when, that night,
He went from our last supper to his death,
The papers strangely disappeared.
I do believe, Sir Marmaduke,

De Greville's party, like ourselves,
Are lost in wonder at their sudden loss,
For since my short imprisonment
They've offered help to me, if I, at once,
Would give them up those fatal proofs.
They should apply to Gloucester.
For some dark reason, 't is my belief
He holds those proofs as bonds
Against the ruthless barons.

Sir Mar. But why charge you with witchcraft,
And force you to this trial?

Jane Shore. The dead alone, my friend, are safe
With this man, whose malign influence
Has made him feared by stronger men than he;
His gentle manner gloves an iron hand,
His quiet covers dark and deep designs,
His smile is winter's sunlight cast on ice,
Or lightning gleam of teeth the tiger shows
When its lip it lifts in anger ere its springs.
He has the subtle beauty of the snake,
That terrifies while yet it charms to kill.
The Duke has done no open wrong to me,
But I am in his way, and I have felt,
As nature gives each one to feel
The presence of its enemy, when he is near.

(*Enter* CARDINAL ST. JOHN and Church dignitaries, the

DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, DE GREVILLE, and lords. *The Lord Cardinal takes the chair, and lords spiritual and lords temporal range themselves on either side. Enter WHITHOLD, FRIAR BUNGAY, and attendants.*)

Jane Shore. His grace, the Cardinal, who knows me well,

Will surely see that I have justice here.
There is De Faulk, whose large domain
I saved to him through favor with the king.
Trouville, too, hath favors at my hand.
They all, save Gloucester, owe me much.

Sir Mar. The hungry hound forgets the food
Given him but yesterday. Mistress Shore
These men are all ashamed of gifts
From any one, but most of all from you.

Cardinal. Jane Shore.

Jane Shore. Your grace.

Cardinal. You'll hear the charges now preferred
By counsel of the state, wherein
You stand accused of sin and crime,
'Gainst God and man. For this are we
Assembled here, to give you trial
On our most sacred oaths. Hear, then, and plead.

King's Counsel. (*Reads.*) Jane Shore, of London,
we present, as guilty of divers crimes and misdemeanors
against the law of God, and against the peace and dignity

of the realm, to wit: that for the year last past, and many years previous thereto, moved by a heart prone to evil, and instigated by Satan, she did practice the unholy arts of witchcraft, to the confusion and wrong of many honest people; that, thus dealing in a deadly art, she wrought strangely and wrongfully upon his late Sacred Majesty, the King Edward Plantagenet, known as Edward IV., and so practicing, his Sacred Majesty living did languish, and languishing did die.

Cardinal. You hear—plead you guilty or not guilty?

Jane Shore. Good my lords spiritual and temporal,
To all these several charges I here plead
Not guilty, and pray you give me patient hearing.

King's Counsel. Francis Bungay, friar, stand forth
and be sworn. (FRIAR BUNGAY *steps forward.*)

Jane Shore. My lords, and Lord Cardinal,
If this man be witness 'gainst me, I pray
That he be heard without the mockery of an oath.
His hand that he would hold to God
Is stained with human blood. Nay, more,
His soul is seared by wickedness too foul
For such appeal.

Cardinal. Mistress Shore, we must admonish you
To be more guarded in your speech. (*Confers with King's
Counsel.*)

It is her right—the oath is her protection.

Proceed without it if she so demands.

King's Counsel. What do you know of defendant's
practice,

As set forth in these charges?

Bungay. I know that they are true.

Cardinal. Well, proceed.

Bungay. For weeks I was an inmate of her house,
Through favor of His Majesty the King.
And I do know she had a waxen image
Of his grace, the Duke of Gloucester.

Jane Shore. Alack! what monstrous lie is this?

Bungay. In the right arm of this foul thing,
Did she with desperate curses and deep spells
Fix many pins to wither and destroy
His grace's sacred limb.

Duke. And, by St. Paul, with some success, my lords,
For see my arm is robbed of its fair shape. (*Shows his arm.*)

Jane Shore. Your grace, if this be proof against me,
Then did I cast the spell that made you lame,
While in your mother's womb. For well 'tis known
You came forth thence thus sadly marred, for which
We all lament. Alas! I was not born
When that occurred.

Duke. Are we assembled here to wag our tongues
In disputations with a noisy witch?

Cardinal. Again, Jane Shore, I do admonish you
That these unseemly interruptions
Offend the court and give no aid to you.

Jane Shore. I am a helpless woman, pleading for my
life,
If I mistake, for I am ignorant,
I pray you pardon me my error.
My counsel, learned in the law,
Tells me that I may put all falsehood
To the question—let its source be what it may—
For that we English people have no fear
To calmly face the truth, though truth be death,
Stand I on English ground, my lords,
In whose pure soil oppression can not thrive.
Nay, is it not our boast, well known abroad,
That in this air of England injustice dies,
And that we all have equal standing here
Before the law? I pray you, then, give space
To my poor efforts.

Cardinal. You may proceed.

Jane Shore. Thanks, my lord. (*To the friar.*)
Witness, is not your name, your real name,
Francis Capello?

Bungay. My name is Francis Bungay.

Jane Shore. Were you not driven in disgrace
From your good order near to Florence;

After, condemned for murder of your mistress,
And only saved from ignominious death
By pleading of your privilege?

Cardinal. Nay, Mistress Shore, the law which now
you quote

Tells us the witness shall not criminate himself.
Have you no other proof of what you charge?

Jane Shore. He carries that, Lord Cardinal,
Upon his shameless body.

Bid him but show the court his shoulder,

(*FRIAR BUNGAY falls upon his knees*)

Bungay. I cry for mercy, lords, for I was innocent
And most unjustly dealt with.

Jane Shore. (*Suddenly pulling the gown from BUNGAY'S
shoulder and revealing the letter "A."*)

See, my lords, his crime and punishment
Are burned into his flesh.

Duke. God's wounds, gentlemen, it seems
We're all on trial save the witch.

This man is my retainer, and, as such,
I give him my protection
Until he hath fair trial.

Cardinal. Your grace, this is a matter that concerns
The church. We can not lend its sacred robes
To cover the hangman's brand. Now, take this knave
And let him be well guarded. (*Exit BUNGAY under guard.*)

Jane Shore. And now, my lords, I pray you let me go
In peace. You see I am no witch,
But a poor woman, whose fate it was
To do a service to her king
Wherein there was much peril. If to wake
His gratitude for that was witchcraft,
Then am I guilty of a grave offense;
But all of you do know that he was kind
And soft to those he loved, as he was stern
To those who waked his wrath. His confidence in me
Is much exaggerated, for you see me here
A poor woman without so much withal
To give me daily bread and gowns enough
To shield me from the cold. And I have striven,
In my poor way, to aid the more unfortunate
Who did incur his anger. If to plead for such,
And, pleading, gain their cause, was witchcraft, then
Was I a witch. Since when, my lords,
Have witches turned peacemakers, to smooth the way
Of rough contention and of bitter strife?
I, wicked as I am, boast not of alms;
But none went hungry from my open door,
Who sought for food or shelter. E'er was this
The work of witches? My lords, my lords,
I pray you let me go in peace!

Cardinal. In verity, it seems to me,

There is no reason, lords, to hold Jane Shore
Longer on trial. Naught has been proved here,
And I say, let her depart.

Voices. And I—and I—and I.

Duke. Hold—not so fast, your grace.
There is a witness here we may not doubt.

Jane Shore. (*To MARMADUKE.*) Alas! what does he mean?

Sir Mar. Some devilish mischief, judging by the grin
That curls about his mouth.

Duke. Her Majesty, the Queen, the hope, my lords,
Of mourning England, awaits without.
Will you, Lord Cardinal, inform her we attend
Her gracious bidding?

Cardinal. Most readily, your grace. (*Exit.*)

Jane Shore. What can this mean? What darker cloud
Hangs threatening o'er us?

Sir Mar. I can not tell. We had the court full sure
But for this further proof.

(*Re-enter CARDINAL, escorting QUEEN ELIZABETH in deep mourning.*)

Cardinal. We'll hear, your Majesty, all you may say
Concerning crimes with which Jane Shore,
Defendant here, stands charged. Is it your wish
The Queen be sworn?

Jane Shore. Nay, nay, my lords, an oath would add
no weight

To what the Queen may say.

Cardinal. Know you this woman?

Queen. Much to my sorrow, I did know her long
As one who had strange power o'er my lord,
And on that very day he sought my arms to die,
I visited her home in such disguise
She did not know me, and in such disguise
She did confess to me her crime.

Jane Shore. Your Majesty!

Queen. I told her my trouble, still disguised,
And asked her by what power, charm, or drug
She won the hearts of men and crazed their brain,
So that they knew not right from wrong, nor knew
Their duty to their homes nor their poor wives.
The witch seemed moved by this.

Jane Shore. Alas! my better feelings blinded me
To the cruel snare right at my wretched feet.

Queen. Thus moved she gave to me a subtle charm
Of rarest power, so she said, which I was urged
To wear upon my heart, and here it is. (*Gives charm.*)

Cardinal. Unhappy woman, have you aught to say
In answer to such fearful proof as this?

Jane Shore. Naught, my lord. Her Majesty, the
Queen,

Hath told the truth—naught but the truth—and yet
Not all the truth.

Cardinal. How dare you intimate a doubt
On what you do confess?

Jane Shore. I question not, my lord, the fatal proofs
Now given by Her Majesty.

I only say, she did not tell you all,
For all she could not know. Moved by her tale,
And thinking her some city dame
Troubled to tears by household misery,
And while denying still I was a witch,
To ease her mind, I gave that amulet,
Which I had worn near all my life,
Close next my heart, the dearest gift on earth,
For it was given me, all wet with tears,
By my poor mother on her dying bed.
I pray you open it, my lord, and see
The sort of wicked charm I gave to her.

Cardinal. (*Opens and reads.*) “May he, who bade
the children come to him, be father to the orphan.”

children come to him, be father to the orphan.”)

Duke. This is the devil's own; for well we know
The prayers thus used, are prayers read backward,
To serve the witch's purpose.

Jane Shore. I know, I know, my lords—I make
No further plea. My doom is sealed,
My days are numbered, and I here accept

My shameful death, for deeds I did not do,
In expiation of the sins I did commit.
One word, your gracious majesty,
You have here sworn away my life ;
I do forgive, for I have done you wrong.
Moved by your piteous tale, I all forgot
My proper caution, and I gave to you
My dying mother's gift, a blessing then,
That in your cruel hand now turns a curse
To blight my wretched life. Queen—mother—
Look to your babes ; see that a mother's prayer,
Wrung out in anguish, may not be in vain.
When evil comes to you and them—
For come it will from God, in God's good time,
To all who substitute their human wrath
For his diviner judgment—
Look to your babes, oh ! Queen.

Queen. This woman frightens me

Duke. Tush, good sister. Am I not here ?

May God forget me when I forget

You or your precious babes. (*Exit with QUEEN.*)

Cardinal. You will make up the judgment, lords,
And give the proper form to sentence. (*They confer.*)

Jane Shore. (*To SIR MARMADUKE.*) Be not so grieved,
my only friend,

They do but give to me the common doom.

We all must die. What reck's it now
To me that a few wretched days are lost-
Wiped from the common score?

King's Counsel. Jane Shore, hear the sentence of the court. It is decreed that you, clad in a sheet, in token of your sin, and holding a taper, that all men may see your punishment, shall walk with bare feet the streets of London till you die. And no man nor woman nor child shall give you to eat or drink, or open shelter to you, on penalty of death. May God have mercy on your sinful soul.
(*Exeunt CARDINAL and court.*)

Jane Shore. Ah me! what cruelty is this?
To walk a public scorn until I die.
To die in shame upon the cruel streets,
As if I were a brute. Nay, worse;
The brute excites some pity in its death,
While I have none. Have mercy on me, Jesus!
Oh! grant me strength to die. Why pray for strength?
Oh! take my strength, that I may die full soon!
My heart sinks in me, and I shake from fear,
It is so terrible.

Sir Mar. These lords be devils in human form,
And Gloucester is the devil of them all.

Jane Shore. I did think to die without a moan
For well I merit death; but, oh! my friend,
This torture is so frightful.

Sir Mar. (*Aside.*) Yet must she see her daughter
ere she die.

Mistress Shore, fair Alice waits without,
Longing to clasp you in her arms.

Jane Shore. Alice, my own—take her away.
Take her away. Let her not see me.

Ah! never let her know my sort of death.
Man, if you care for God, take her away!

Sir Mar. Too late. She's here. (*Enter ALICE.*)

Alice. My mother! (*Embraces her.*)

Jane Shore. My child! Why did they fetch you here!

Alice. What have they done to you? Speak! speak!
My heart is breaking. Oh! tell me now,
What have they done to you, my mother?

Jane Shore. You're not ashamed, my child, to call me
that,

I who have wronged you so?

Alice. Ashamed! Why should I be ashamed?

You did me wrong in that you did conceal
The mother from me. What have they done?

I stood without, and stern old men strode by.

I saw the queen—her face was troubled;

While the cruel duke of Gloucester smiled.

What have they done?

Jane Shore. Naught, my child that's worse than ban-
ishment

From you.

Alice. But I'll accompany you, my mother,
And soothe your cares, and be your patient nurse.

Jane Shore. (*To SIR MARMADUKE.*) For God's sake
man, come to my aid,

Or I shall die. There, there, my child!
Go with him now. I'll see you, sweet, anon.

Sir Mar. Come, my Alice, we must hence.
We'll soon return. Now, come.

Alice. I can not. Oh! I can not. (*Faints in SIR
MARMADUKE'S arms.*)

Jane Shore. One kiss, my little pet, poor little pet!
I'll never see you more. Farewell!
Now hasten from me ere she can revive.

(*Exeunt SIR MARMADUKE and ALICE. Enter CARDINAL
ST. JOHN; JANE SHORE throws herself at his feet.*)

Oh! holy father, save me! Save me!
See the Queen straightway. Plead with her
To grant me speedy death. Tell the Duke
To give me the rope or block, aught but this
Most horrible torture.

Cardinal. My child,
A woman's heart when plead to by a woman
Is pitiless as death. The Lord Protector,
His grace, the Duke of Gloucester, hath in his heart
That much of woman and no more.
You plead, I'm pained to say, in vain,
For I have prayed them both and prayed in vain.

Jane Shore. Alas! what may I do, for I am weak
And full of fears?

Cardinal. Put all your trust in Him, who once like you
Carried his cross amid the mocking crowd,
So weak, so heavy, and so sick at heart,
To die as thou must die. But trust in Him,
And he will give you strength to bear your cross.
With every feeble step some sin will fall,
With every pain your soul will rise more pure,
And death will not be death to you,
Who thus redeemed will rise to God,
And with His angels find eternal rest.

(During the latter part of this scene the stage has darkened into twilight, and as the CARDINAL delivers his last speech, the moonlight streams through large window back of colored glass, bringing into view the cross painted upon it.)

CURTAIN

ACT V.

SCENE: Charing Cross, London. Night. A snow storm.
Enter JANE SHORE, in white gown, bare-footed, and carrying a light, followed by a crowd hooting at her. She seems nearly exhausted.

Jane Shore. Good people, do not crowd upon me so.
You frighten me. The stones do wound my feet and I

am hungered and faint and so athirst I scarce can speak. If you will go aside and let me die in peace, I will bless you all.

First Voice. We want no blessings from a witch.

Second Voice. A witch's blessing is the devil's curse.

Jane Shore. I am no witch. The holy cardinal, good St. John, will tell you this. I am but a woman, most unfortunate—

First Voice. Hearken not to her, she will cast a spell; she did bewitch the King.

(*Cries, "Stone her! stone her!" A rush.*)

Jane Shore. (*Cries out.*) Oh! God, have mercy on me! Oh, please don't! (*They hesitate.*) Good folk, give me a little space and I will die as it is decreed. I am nearly dead. You do so frighten me. Alas! I see not well! I am quite blind and my head swims—but it does seem to me that I see faces of those who once asked alms of me, when I was rich and powerful. Will they not pity me? Oh! they will pity me surely, and let me die in peace. If I did bewitch the late King, God rest his soul, it is for your good.

Crowd. She does confess—stone her, stone her! (*A rush. Enter WHITHOLD.*)

Whithold. Stand back, my masters. What have you here?

First Voice. The witch, Jane Shore.

Second Voice. And we will kill her lest she cast a spell upon us all.

Whithold. 'In that, most worthy folk, you do your bounden duty. But let me teach you how to treat a witch.

First Voice. The King's fool will make sport for us. Do it, fool, do it.

Whithold. (*Approaches JANE. Aside to her.*) Fear not, good mistress, I will protect you. (*Aloud.*) You see this flask, my master. It hath in it holy water from the river Jordan, blessed by the Pope. I do but make her swallow ever so small a drop (*puts his arms around her*) and then she turneth black, and in a little space will the devil come in thunder and carry her away.

Crowd. Good! good! make her drink, that we may see the devil get his own.

Whithold. But when the devil comes, good masters, have a care. He comes in lightning, look you—(*aside.*) Lean on me, mistress—(*aloud*) and death-dealing thunder, and all who have lied about their neighbors are in danger (*some of the crowd start back, the others laugh*), and all who have kissed their neighbors' wives will suffer (*others start back—laughter*), and all that steal will die (*several start back, and the entire crowd gets further from JANE SHORE and WHITHOLD*). Now will I make her drink. Look ye all to the east and see the devil come. (*They turn, and many*

steal off. To JANE SHORE.) Now, mistress, drink; it is a cordial that will help thee much. (*He puts the flask to her mouth and she drinks eagerly.*)

Jane Shore. Alas! poor fool, poor fool, this act will cost thee dear.

Whithold. Fear not for me. A fool may do, and prosper, what a wise man may not look at and live. Now wait. Ho, ho, he comes! See the devil comes! (*The crowd runs off.*) Ha, ha, ha, the cowards, how they run! Now, mistress, eat of this cake. (*She eats ravenously.*) If I can but hide thee for a time.

Jane Shore. Ah, me! Of all my many friends—of all who followed, flattered, kissed by hands for favors, this poor fool alone is true.

Whithold. Because he is a fool. No wise man is true but to himself, and no woman is true to any thing, for the Lord made her a fool that she might bear children.

Jane Shore. I do feel comforted. But, alas, I must die; 'tis so decreed.

Whithold. Yea, verily, you must die when your time comes, as we all die by the decree of heaven.

Jane Shore. And do you give me hope?—ah, Whithold, it is a dismal thing to die as the cruel council ordered me to die, like any helpless brute upon the streets. You give me hope?

Whithold. Else, had I not given you to eat and

drink. Be not cast down, my mistress, your daughter, Lady Woodville, weeps the hours away, bidding fair to die with you.

Jane Shore. What sayest thou, good fool—my daughter, Lady Woodville?

Whithold. I marrily. They have wed in haste, lest the old miser, Greville, and the great Duke of Gloucester now our Lord Protector, might wish the pretty maiden harm.

Jane Shore. I am amazed—your news is comfort to my heart, as your food and drink were comfort to my stomach; now can I die in peace?

Whithold. Talk not of dying, mistress; leave that to wiser heads who make to-day sad with troubles of to-morrow. Let me put out your light to save your life, that we may steal away unseen. (*Noise heard without.*) May Satan seize me, but they come again. (*Solemn march heard approaching.*) Nay, 't is the midnight burial of the King. Stand we aside, mistress. The dead King will be a means to aid escape.

(*They withdraw. Enter procession; pallbearers carrying the body of the king, followed by guards and preceded by CARDINAL ST. JOHN and church dignitaries, with lighted candles and music. They halt, placing the body before the cross.*)

Cardinal. Set down your sacred load, 't is meet that we

Pause in our solemn duty here beneath
The shadow of the holy cross of Christ,
Portal of death to Him and life to us,
Emblem of power, for by the blood of Christ
Are Kings anointed who do govern men,
And we who bury Edward may commune
Upon his many virtues ere the tomb
Closes on all that 's mortal of him. Now,
The sins that lie between his God and him
Appear before that bar where each must stand,
All naked and alone, the King uncrowned,
No better than the poorest subject there,
To be adjudged. Indeed, more peril comes
To one who has high trusts; for it is said
To such shall strict account be rendered.
His tomb about to close upon him leaves
His deeds to chroniclers for coming time;
Remembering these, we may well pray to God
For mercy to his soul.

He was a man made in a larger mold,
A King of kingly form and generous mind,
Slow to resent, but quick to act his will
And quicker to forgive. Wisdom he had
With soldierly resolution. In the council,
Calm and far-seeing—in the field of strife,
Sudden, deadly, and most conclusive.

For we have seen how in his steady reign
This realm which was a chaos wrought from war—
Ambitious barons making endless strife—
He brought to Christain order and a peace
That spreads its snow-white pinions o'er the land.
He gave us laws that do protect the weak
While they restrain the strong. Judges he gave
To adjudicate by law and justicé,
Twixt man and man. To the holy church
He large endowments made, while to the poor
His royal hand and heart were ever open.
While thus the King we bury in this storm,
How many, many thousands shivering pray
For rest unto the soul of him who gave
Them, living, the means to live.
Take up the corpse.

(As they are about to do so, a shriek is heard, and JANE SHORE rushes on the stage, WHITHOLD vainly striving to hold her, and throws herself upon the body.)

Jane Shore. Edward, oh my King! my King! Oh! take me with thee. My cross is more than I can bear. They doom me to a cruel death, and yet I can not die.

(The guards suddenly start forward.)

Cardinal. Stay! this is the woman Shore, doomed to a cruel death by highest council. She hath taken sanctuary on the body of God's anointed. About her wretched

form the holy Church throws now its sacred guard. Let no man harm her more. Move on.

(The crowd follows the procession, leaving JANE SHORE lying upon the ground, WHITHOLD near her. Enter JOHN SHORE, SIR and LADY WOODVILLE.)

John Shore. Jane, my wife, I do forgive you now. Look up poor heart, your husband comes. His arms are round you. Speak, my wife! Forgive, as I forgive. Oh! say that you forgive, For I and all the world have done you wrong. Jane! wife! speak to me!

Lady Woodville. Mother—mother!

Jane Shore. *(Pushing feebly away.)* Do not crowd on me so,
Good people, I will die as soon as I can.
But, oh! let me die in peace.

John Shore. Alas! she knows us not. Her mind's distraught,
She's dying with the cold. Quick with the cloak. *(Folds it around her.)*

Jane Shore. They bring my winding sheet. Then am I dead?
And yet I suffer. Does not death fetch quick relief?
Oh! holy mother, here I humbly pray. *(Sinks on her knees.)*
Forgive my deadly sins;
Ease me of pain.

John Shore. Jane! Jane! my wife! I am your husband, John—

John Shore—come back to you.

Jane Shore. (*Staggering up.*) John, good husband, Take me hence. (*Looking wildly around as she clutches him.*) Wicked people hunt me down with stones.

John Shore. Fear not, poor wife. I will protect you, pet.

Look not so fearful. You are pardoned, love. They dare not harm you now.

Lady Woodville. Mother! see, we are near. I have my arms about you.

Jane Shore. And you will take me hence from all this coil;

These cruel men who carry stones,
And crowd upon me with mocking jeers?
They call me witch, my husband, and they seek
My death. Quick! take me hence,
For they will come again. Oh! take me hence,
To our sweet home hard by the babbling brook,
Where sunny fields are full of flowers, John,
And woods with birds. There will we live and love.
(*Starting back*) Ha! what form is this that comes between
us, John?

It is the King! Alas! I can not go;
It is decreed that I with him shall lie

In stony death,
For that I was his leman when he lived,
I must be his in death;
Else there were no pardon for my sin.
I come, Oh! King, I come! (*Falls and dies.*)

CURTAIN.

EMOTIONAL INSANITY.

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT.

SCENE I. A handsome apartment, half drawing-room half library. To right, library table with books, writing material, etc. Landscape seen through glass door, back. JAMES discovered seated lazily in an arm-chair; SUSAN engaged dusting furniture.

James. Susan, you look as fresh and delicious this June morning as a mutton head dressed in oyster sauce.

Susan. Is that your best in the way of a compliment?

James. Ah! you hollyhock—you artichoke—you cauliflower—

Susan. See here, Mister Jim, when you go into the garden for fine speeches, I'd thank you to keep clear of the vegetable beds.

James. I must say, you plump partridge of the prairies, I ain't much on the botanics; what would you, me love?

Susan. Well, call me a tuberose?

James. You tuberose!

Susan. A moss bud.

James. You moss bud!

Susan. A lovely tulip.

James. You are a two lips, by George! I like that better than any. They're good to taste. The two lips they round up like loving rosebuds—are colored like coral, and as soft as Lucca's notes. (*Aside.*) Got that from Colonel Bangs' note-book; he lets that off on every pretty girl he meets.

Susan. That's beautiful.

James. But after all, Susan, a kiss is only a surface indication—

Susan. What do you mean by that?

James. Picked it up in California. It's what the miners say while prospecting. When they find a few shiners on top they say it's a surface indication.

Susan. You've been all over the world, and I sometimes, wonder, I do, how you can be willing to stay in such a dull place as this, with such a cross man as our old Mr. Brown.

James. It is a little hard on a fellow—a fellow designed, you see, to adorn society. We have traveled, Susan, we have flirted, we have gambled, and we have been most elegantly bored in all parts of the world. But for a dense, steady article of bore just give me this village. By Jove, you can't cut it. I wish I could!

Susan. I am very sorry for you, Mr. Jim.

James. But for you, my rosebud, they might have put me in my little bed under the daisies long since.

Susan. And that is why you stay here?

James. Well, yes.

Susan. But why did you come? Why did you leave society you adorn for this place?

James. Susan, that is a secret.

Susan. A secret!

James. No, it is more—it is a conspiracy.

Susan. You don't mean it?

James. A plot—a deep, dark, mysterious plot.

Susan. Gracious! Mr. Jim, you frighten me.

James. I want to. No conspiracy is perfect, Susan, without women in it. We'll have two. You swear never to betray us.

Susan. What is it?

James. Hold. (*Seizes the duster and holds it before her in a theatrical manner.*)

Upon the jeweled hilt of this my trusty sword,

My trusty sword, you swear?

Now you say, "I swear."

Susan. I swear!

James. Pretty well done, that. Did you observe my pose, Susan?

Susan. No, where do you keep it?

James. Bother! I mean my posish—thus. Got that

from Booth when he affidavies his companions touching the spiritual manifestation.

Susan. But what's it all about?

James. Susan, I came to rob this house.

Susan. Gracious! are you a highwayman?

James. Not much. But keep it up, Susan, it's good practice. When I say "I come to rob," you must throw yourself back on your right limb and *pose*—thus: I come to rob. Now you say "Ah!" "Ah" is better than "gracious," Susan. Now: I come to rob.

Susan. (*Posing.*) Ah!

James. I come to rob this mansion of its priceless jewel—the fair Merelda.

Susan. (*As before.*) Ah!

James. To larceny the maid.

Susan. (*As before.*) Ah!

James. To—

Susan. Hold on, Mr. Jim, this is a little tiresome—

James. Right up, Susan, we've had tragedy enough. You see I've been Colonel Bangs' man since the war, and we've knocked about and got on pretty well so long as we flirted, but when we fell in love, Susan, trouble began.

Susan. Why, did you fall in love?

James. Certainly not till I saw you; but I use the "we" there in illustration of our confidential relation to

each other. It's editorial. Well, you see when Colonel Bangs spooned on Miss Merelda—

Susan. What on earth do you mean by spooned?

James. Why, Daisy, when a fellow goes for his sentiment in dead earnest, we say he spoons. I do n't know why, only it seems simple and sloppy—sort of spoon fashion. When my Colonel spooned on Miss Merelda—

Susan. Our Miss—

James. Your Miss—why I looked into the business, and finding "our Miss" had a little fortune in her own right from her maternal grandmother—peace to her ashes—and great expectations from her father, old Brown—peace to his ashes when he gets 'em—I saw that the spoon was gold, and I encouraged it.

Susan. Very kind of you.

James. Oh! I'm prudent. Now the amount of work I had to do in the way of notes, bouquets, messages, and serenades, nearly put me into a decline. I struck on the serenades. I told my Colonel that if he wanted to go caterwauling under windows after night, and getting an assortment of coughs, colds, catarrhs, and consumption, he could go in—but he must count me out.

Susan. But, Mr. Jim, do n't you believe in real love?

James. Certainly, for flirtation, but out of date in matrimony. A gul do n't marry a fellow now. She marries a stone front and a carriage. And so a fellow looks

out for a bank account and bonds. He marries a rich father and posish.

Susan. I do n't like that.

James. Oh! don't you? Nor I either. It's all very well for the upper two dozen, but hard on the lower strata, so says my Colonel. Now, Susan, you've seen one of these belles—a real highflyer—and what can a fellow find to love? Eh! She's one third pannier, one third cotton, and one third dyspepsia.

Susan. Why, Mr. Jim, where did you pick up such stuff?

James. At the Club, Susan. I am a member of the Gentlemen's Gentlemen Reunion. But I don't get on with my story. My Colonel fell in love with old Brown's bank account, and proposed to his daughter—your Miss Merelda. Old Brown is peculiar. He called my Colonel a fashionable sham—heard something about a little blonde—forbade us his house—and then, to cut off all spooning, suddenly moved to this country place.

Susan. Well, what then, Mr. Jim?

James. As old Brown did n't know me I hired to him as coachman, and man-of-all-work, and here I am in the house of the enemy, while my Colonel is *incog.* at the village hotel. Now, how to git the old man's consent, or coax the lady love to elope, is the question that agitates the country.

Enter MERELDA.

Merelda. James, is my father stirring yet?

James. Upon the best of my knowledge and belief, Miss, your excellent paternal does not stir. When he stirs, Miss, the stirring is apt to be heard.

Merelda. Don't be impertinent, James. Have you seen the Colonel this morning?

James. The Colonel has been hid away under a bower of roses in the garden these two hours, where he fights mosquitoes, bugs, ants, gnats, and other agricultural products while waiting for your paternal to take his morning vibration.

COL. BANGS *puts his head in at the door.*

Col. B. I say, is the coast clear?

Merelda. No, no! go away—stay away—you must not be seen.

Col. B. (Coming forward.) Must see you, if I die for it. My angel you have no idea of the aching void within my heart and the pain in my back I have suffered from while living under that damned—I beg pardon—damp old arbor in the garden. I see you, and like the sun you ease my heart and dry up the dampness.

James. Come Susan, let's go on the picket line and watch for the approach of the enemy. (*JAMES and SUSAN exeunt.*)

Merelda. But were my father to find you here—

Col. B. Bother your father! I do n't ask to marry your father—I want you. Let us elope, my darling—

Merelda. And offend the author of my being?
Come now, what would we live on?

Col. B. Mercenary girl, have I not my pay as a retired officer?—lieutenant in the line; retired as brigadier and five thousand a year.

Merelda. You innocent gander! that would n't keep me in hats. No, some means must be found to win his consent, or I die an old maid—or worse, throw myself away on a brownstone front in the city—a cottage at Newport—all incumbered by the aged banker, Bullion.

Col. B. Heartless girl! I see you do not love me.

Merelda. My dear James, do n't be absurd. Of course I love you. When I found myself the envy of all Saratoga because I had your adoration—the handsomest fellow at the springs—I returned your affection with my whole heart. When we went whirling through the waltz and all eyes were on us ready to scratch mine out, I felt that I held in my arms the happiness of a lifetime. And did I not tell eighteen girls in the strictest confidence of our engagement? Did I not cut Fitzpoodle and offend old Bullion—jilt Hamilton Snooks, and give all the time I could spare from dressing to you—

Col. B. Only to throw me off because of your father.

I see I served your purpose at Saratoga, to be thrown over in the rural districts where I am not an ornament.

Merelda. These are bitter words, my Colonel; but I pardon you—they prove your love. But listen. Do you suppose me capable of abandoning my brilliant position when by a little patience we can win all?

Col. B. I love you so entirely that a home in the lowliest hut—

Merelda. With the gardener's son; and then you'll leave me to return in the fifth act in a padded uniform, with a grapevine worked up the back and no end of rooster tails in your military chapeau, to relieve the bankrupt father and the heart-broken maiden.

Col. B. Do n't laugh at me.

Merelda. I can't help it—you are so ridiculous. And, my Colonel James, *I* don't want to be laughed at. I am not willing to have Merelda Brown's brilliant match made a farce of. I will have a superb wedding, with my father to give me away; a tour of Europe, a house in town, and our "cottage by the sea."

Col. B. And if we fail—

Merelda. As Mrs. Macbeth remarks to her Colonel on a like occasion—we fail. But screw your courage to the sticking point, and we'll not fail.

Col. B. You drive me to desperation. I'll murder

that father of yours—I'll send him the "Daily Globe" until he dies in great agony.

Enter JAMES and SUSAN.

James. The enemy approaches—in force.

Old B. (Within.) Jim—Susan—where the devil is the house? (*All scatter and hide save SUSAN.*)

Enter BROWN with bell-rope in hand.

Damme if I am not in a white heat! I've been pulling at this cussed bell-rope to find it a sham—no bell to it—like every thing else—all shams—bah! Susan!

Susan. Yes, sir.

Old B. Do you know that you are confoundedly good-looking?

Susan. Law, sir, you flatter me!

Old B. No, I do n't—I do n't flatter any body. I tell the truth. A man who flatters is a sneak, coward, and liar—bah! Susan!

Susan. Sir?

Old B. Come here. (*She approaches and he attempts to put his arms around her; as he does, SUSAN slips out and JAMES takes her place.*)

James. Did you ring, sir?

Old B. I'll wring your neck, you impertinent—what do you mean, sticking your impudent face in mine that way—eh?

James. Beg pardon, sir—thought you rung, sir.

Old B. No, you did n't; you can lie like an obituary.

James. Thank you, sir—rather flatter myself on my accomplishments, sir.

Old B. And you call lying an accomplishment, do you? I like that. You're all of the same sort; I can't get any one about me but rogues and liars—bah! the same with all the world, bah! By the eternal, but I wish I could find one honest man—I'd salary him just to stand by and refresh me with the truth. Did you hear any thing of that pocketbook I lost last night?

James. Can't hear any thing of it, sir—advertised far and near—offered twenty-five cents reward.

Old B. Who authorized you to offer a reward?—twenty-five cents for three hundred and fifty dollars! Where's my daughter?

Merelda. (*From behind the sofa.*) Here, pa.

Old B. What are you doing there?

Merelda. Well, pa, I was so shocked at your naughty conduct I hid myself.

Old B. No you did n't, you hussy. There's some other reason. There is something up here—you can deceive readily as any. Here, give me my stick. I'll take you along for a walk, and disappoint you. And you, Susan, have my coffee ready by the time I return. (*Exit with MERELDA.*)

Col. B. (*Coming from closet.*) I say, Jim, she's here.

James. Who, sir?

Col. B. The little blonde—Saratoga Common.

James. You do n't say so!

Col. B. Yes, I do. I've been writing her for weeks past offering all sorts of compromises, and the other day I had a hurried note saying that her husband had possession of my letters.

James. The devil!

Col. B. And she had fled from home to come to me.

James. More devils—five thousand devils! You certainly did n't sign your name to the letters?

Col. B. No, only "Your devoted James;" "Your loving Jim;" "Your ever devoted James"—

James. And she's here?

Col. B. Saw her get out of the stage from the last train—no mistaking that wig. She's searching this town over for me this minute—I must cut and run. Could n't face little Saratoga Common now—and if she were to run against old paternal B., he may as well make an early assignment.

Enter SUSAN with coffee, which she places on table, and exit.

James. It's rather ticklish staying about here, sir—the paternal B. may return any moment.

Col. B. I won't go back to the hotel; and curse me if I like a damp arbor in a dewy morning, but I suppose I must go into ambush again.

James. Hurry up, sir—here he comes. This way—

get out here. (*Jumps through the window, banging it after him.*)

Enter OLD BROWN and MERELDA.

Old B. What's that?

James. Dog Bowser, sir—took a mutton chop off your table, and just tumbled through the window, sir.

Old B. Merelda.

Merelda. Sir?

Old B. Did you ever hear a fellow that could fabricate the way this coachman of mine can?

Merelda. Really I can't say, sir.

Old B. He says Bowser went out at that window with a mutton chop. Now I did n't order chops this morning, but muffins, and Bowser was with us in our walk.

James. Well, sir, it was a large Newfoundland, uncommonly like Bowser, and come to look, it was a buttered muffin.

Old B. James?

James. Sir?

Old B. Get out! Susan.

Susan. Sir?

Old B. Get out! Now, Merelda, sit down there while I take my coffee. I want to talk to you about that fellow. (*She takes her work and sits.*) That Colonel Bangs is an adventurer. He is after my money. He shan't have it. He wants you. He shan't have you. You ran

against him at Saratoga, where all the rogues, gamblers, sharpers, thieves, and liars congregate—bah! He is one—I do n't know but what he is all of them—bah! Because he waltzed well, talked well, and dressed well—the puppy—you accepted him. Bah! this coffee is all grounds.

Merelda. Dear pa, you are so unreasonable and so violent.

Old B. What, about the coffee?

Merelda. No, about my Colonel.

Old B. No, I'm not. Do you know what I discovered?

Merelda. I'm sure I do n't know—something very absurd, I expect.

Old B. No; it was criminal. While he was courting you he was intriguing with a married woman, a vile blonde; and he called her—the jackanapes—Saratoga Common, and you Saratoga Preferred.

Merelda. Oh! pa, how could you listen to such an absurd scandal? I'm ashamed of you.

Old B. See here, Merelda, I'm a plain man. I am the son of Johnson, Brown & Co., pork. What I have I've made by honest toil. I'm not going to throw it away on an idle, worthless vagabond who'll spend my money and break your heart. You coaxed me this last summer to Saratoga. I got laughed at and you fooled. It is the resort of shams—bah! women without bodies and

men without shame. I won't look there for a son—no, not I. Bah! I never met with a man yet who was brave enough and honest enough to tell the truth. When I do I'll recommend him to you as a husband. If you take him, good. If you do n't take him go farther and fare worse.

Enter OLD RAGENBAG.

And who are you?

Rag. It do n't make any manner of odds who I am. What is wanted to be known is, who lost a pocketbook?

Old B. To be sure! Why, I did.

Rag. What sort, boss?

Old B. Russia leather, a good deal worn.

Rag. And the pile—

Old B. Three hundred and fifty-one—in fifties, twenties, and fives, with some change.

Rag. Korrekt, boss.

Old B. And did you find it?

Rag. It do n't make any odds concerning that. There's the pocketbook—count the money.

Old B. (*Counting.*) Three fifty-one and eighty-two cents.

Rag. Korrekt?

Old B. Perfectly correct, and there's twenty dollars for your trouble.

Rag. Keep your greenbacks, gov'n'r. I did n't find

it no manner of trouble to pick up that pocket-book, and I do n't want any of your money ; but if you'd just let me bring my firearm to bear on that dog on your'n, that went for the seat of my trowsers, I'd be obleeged to you. (*Fetches old horse-pistol out of his bag.*) Dogs are dirty arastocruts and hate rag men.

Old B. Why, who are you ?

Rag. I'm Old Ragenbag, the ragman. I was brought up on tombstones till eight years of age, when my father, the sexton, died, and then I got to be chief engineer to a blind hand-organ, when I carried the charitable cup in a solemn manner through the crowds. The blind hand-organ was a vicious old cuss, and I was kicked and cuffed through creation many years, till I up and run'd away. Then I j'ined the church ag'in and became deputy gravedigger ; then I was promoted to sexton, and lost my place through a bad habit I had uv tellin' uv the truth.

Old B. Why, how was that ?

Rag. Well, you see we had a revival, and it was my duty to keep an eye on the wicked young men and boys who'd put brimstone in the stove, and make us smell hell when we was a sarchin' for heaven ; an' I was watchin' round a dark corner for them wicked young men when I come on Deacon Snailor and Sister Maria Potts, and the Deacon began to holler he see'd the Prophet a goin' up—and then he called on me in meetin' to say ef I had n't

seen that miracle, and I said no, but I'd seen Deacon Snailor a kissin' Sister Maria Potts in a promiscuous manner, an' they asked ef I'd swear to that, and I said yes, I'd be damned ef I would'nt. I was charged with lyin', but was excommunicated for profane language. Then I went into the antique wearin' apparel business, an' the country all around knows me as "Truthful Rag," "Little Hatchet," and "Old George," because I never was known to prevaricate. Rags! Rags!

Old B. You're the man I've been looking for. Give me your honest hand; I engage you from this minute.

Rag. What for?

Old B. To stand by me and tell the truth.

Rag. Look at here—do n't you poke fun at me. I do n't allow no man that privilege.

Old B. I am in earnest; I engage you this minute; I'll give you liberal wages.

Rag. To tell the truth at your elbow?

Old B. Exactly.

Rag. Well, boss, while I'm engaged in that pursuit what'll you do?

Old B. I'll enter into bonds to stand by you and forfeit fifty dollars for every lie I tell.

Rag. Just put that in writing, boss.

Old B. (*Writes*). There we are.

Rag. Korrekt.

Old B. My daughter, you see before you one of nature's noblemen—your true aristocrat.

Merelda. Glad to make your acquaintance, Hon. Mr. Ragman.

Rag. Same to you, Miss. Hope you'll have an honest husband, and children as will be—

Enter servant with MRS. WILLOWS.

Ser. Mrs. Widow Willows, sir.

Widow. I am sorry to intrude upon you, Mr. Brown, but I'm forced to make an appeal in behalf of fourteen fatherless children.

Old B. Really, my good woman, I pay so much for the poor that I hav'n't a cent.

Rag. Hello! hello! Boss, that won't do. Here's your pocket-book, fat as a seal. Now, if you don't want to give, say so.

Old B. Tut, tut, man, I can't spare the money.

Rag. Then out with it—do n't lie about it.

Old B. Bless my soul! Well, here, take it. Now, go, good woman.

Widow. May the blessings of the fatherless fall on your aged head.

Rag. (*Taking off his hat.*) Amen. Now go, widder. (*Exit Widow.*)

Merelda. (*Laughing.*) I fear pa, nature's aristocrat, like the other aristocrats, will be found rather extravagant.

Old B. Oh! bother—he do n't understand, you see.

Merelda. No, I fear not.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Delegation of citizens making an appeal for the home for indignant females.

Old B. Indigent females, you fool! Show 'em in—I've been bored to death reading their appeals in behalf of that swindle—bah!—and now they come in person.

Enter Delegation.

Chairman. Mr. Brown, we come to you as a wealthy and influential citizen, in behalf of a home for indigent females.

Old B. Yes, gentlemen, but I really have not had time to read your memorial.

Rag. There you go, boss—lie number two—

Old B. But—

Rag. Not a but. You said you've been bored with that swindle; but will it be a little harder now to tell the truth, or forfeit?

Old B. You misunderstood me.

Rag. Not a bit uv it.

Merelda. No, pa—the Hon. Mr. Rag-bag is right.

Old B. Here, give me your paper. I subscribe one share.

Chairman. Thank you, sir; your influence is more to us than the money. Good morning, sir. (*Exeunt.*)

Merelda. This is delicious.

Old B. Miss, you go to your room!

Merelda. Certainly. Good morning, Hon. Rag-bag.

Rag. Mornin', Miss. (*Exit MERELDA.*)

Old B. Now look here, old man.

Rag. I'm looking.

Old B. There are certain reasons—

Rag. For lyin'?

Old B. Why no, not exactly lying; but I'll explain after while. That will do for the present. Here, James! (*Rings. Enter JAMES.*) Here, you; this is my friend Ragenbag. I have employed him as an antidote to your rascality. He is an honest man and tells the truth. See that he is well cared for. (*Exit.*)

James. Truthful man, permit me to vibrate!

Rag. What's that?

James. Old Probity, that is a proposition to shake your honest hand.

Rag. Oh! certainly. (*Gives him awring.*)

James. Gewhilicans! Did you labor under the delusion that you was a patent double-cog clothes-wringer?

Rag. That's what I call a shake of an honest hand,

James. Well, I don't care to belong to that lodge—the grip is too much for me. What did the old bumble B. say you were engaged to do?

Rag. Tell the truth.

James. No, now—honest Injun?

Rag. Young feller, when I say a thing I mean it.

James. He is to go around and tell the truth. I say, you ought to have good wages, old man.

Rag. Why so?

James. When a man goes into the business of butting stone walls he ought to have plenty of shimplasters to cover his bruises. Have you got a padded cap for a helmet and a stuffed shield for—down, then?

Rag. What do I want with them things?

James. For protection. If you don't get more kicks and cuffs than coppers I'm a heathen.

Rag. What's your occupation?

James. Mine? Why, lying, principally.

Rag. Young feller, ain't you ashamed?

James. Ashamed! old Honesty! I am covered with blushes. But it's the way of this wicked world. Truth is a luxury—can I have luxuries? Look at my dependent family of fourteen children and an aged father crying like little ravens for food!

Rag. Poor young man!

James. Now this venerable mother—

Rag. You said father just now.

James. Suppose I did; would you deprive me of a mother?

Rag. Oh! no.

James. Well, then, do n't cut 'em off.

Rag. And can't you take care of 'em in honesty and truth?

James. Certainly not. There is no demand for them articles. Nobody tries it on. Look at the merchant—is n't his profits lies? Look at the doctor—ar n't his doses falsehoods? What's a lawyer but a lie—

Rag. Young man, would you mind giving me a little bread and cheese?

James. Do I look like a man who would refuse you bread and cheese?

Rag. Would you mind adding a drop of ale?

James. Do I look like a man who'd deny you ale?
(*Rings. Enter servant.*) Here, Thomas, give this aged citizen large quantities of bread and cheese and the smallest quantity of ale. (*To RAGENBAG.*) Follow him, Old Honesty. (*Exeunt RAGENBAG and THOMAS.*) My Colonel pitched this in at my window, tied to a stone. Let me see what it is. (*Reads.*) "Jim, look out. I heard two detectives near my ambush talking to each other. They are watching the house—look sharp. J. B." A detective! That's a fellow, too stupid for a thief, who turns thief-catcher so as to divide all around. I have it, by Jove! Old Honesty is one of them. Ah-ha! Caught you there! Let me see—I'll smoke him. Here's his bag. Now if this bag is filled with shavings—and I'll bet

it is—I've got him sure; and I'll have him kicked out for a burglar. (*Is about to open bag when SUSAN enters. JAMES hearing her, whistles in an unconcerned manner, dropping the bag.*) Oh! is that you, Susan?

Susan. Certainly, Mr. James—came for the cups. But what are you doing with that nasty bag?

James. I'm a committee of seventy selected to smell out fraud, and show the difference between Tweedle-do and Tweedle-done.

Susan. I do n't understand.

James. Few do. Now I have wagered an immense sum with myself that this bag is stuffed with shavings. Now hold it.

Susan. Ah, the dirty thing!

James. (*Pulling out a pair of ragged pants.*) Lost, by Jove! See, Susan, these are what the females are fighting for. We'll send them with our compliments to Miss Susan Anthony and Cady Stanton. (*Pulls out pannier.*) And, here, Susan, the vanities. And now, me love, tell me why this is like a tale in the *Ledger*. Give it up?

Susan. Of course.

James. It is a tail of pleasing fiction based on a stern reality.

Susan. Ain't you ashamed!

James. So ashamed I blush. (*Pulls out petticoat.*) And this, Susan is what moves the world—a petticoat.

“Flag of the free heart’s hope and home, by angel’s hands to valor given.”

Susan. I won’t stay and hear such stuff.

James. Hold, me tuberoses—here’s papers. Let me see: delicate sheets—fine, scratchy female writing. (*Reads.*) “Dearest Harry—You swear never to desert your loving Maria.” See, Susan, love and letter thrown away—trampled under foot, and then to the rag-bag. “To what base uses do we come at last!” Oh! bother—this old fellow is no detective. If he was smart enough to get up this thing to deceive, he’d be an alderman; we’d find him in the *Credit Lobelia*. Hello! there comes the old Bumble B. Hurry, Susan. (*Tumbles articles into the bag, throws it behind sofa, and exit. Susan takes tray and goes out as OLD BROWN and RAGENBAG enter.*)

Old B. I hope you find yourself comfortable here, my truthful friend.

Rag. Well, can’t complain. Grub’s good, I must say. But there’s a feller here in brass buttons an’ a good deal of brass in his face, that for cool, downright lyin’ beats bobtail.

Old B. James—oh, I know him; he’s the poison—you’re the antidote. (*Seats himself at table.*) Now I want you—

Enter SERVANT.

Servant. There’s a lady here, sir, says she must see you.

Old B. Well, let her see me. Another beggar, I suppose.

Enter MRS. RAVEN WILD.

Mrs. W. I wish to see you a few moments, Mr. Brown, in private.

Old B. This is a confidential friend of mine, Madam; you can speak freely before him. Take a seat.

Mrs. W. I am in deep trouble. I come to you—I need advice. I want your sympathy.

Rag. He'll give lots of that, Madam—so will I.

Old B. Mr. Ragenbag, do n't interrupt the lady.

Mrs. W. You see before you, sir, an oppressed wife—a miserable woman. Married at an age when I could not use maturer wisdom, I united myself to a man who could not appreciate the refined delicacy of my sentiments, the tender organization of my feelings. I longed for sympathy, love and companionship; he wanted a slave—he called it wife. A poet by nature I soared from earth into the heaven of imagination. I sought for the inspiration of the poets; he, of the earth, earthy, would bind me to a wash-tub.

Old B. Ragenbag!

Rag. Sir?

Old B. This female is crazy.

Rag. Korrekt.

Mrs. W. Do you heed me, sir? Life became unen-

durable. At last, at a fashionable summer resort, I met my affinity—a sympathetic soul. Ah! the long summer rides and walks—the heaven on earth! We separated—we corresponded. As I saw one I could love, and one who could appreciate, I seemed to draw near and nearer my misery. I looked my horrible fate in the face—I could not bear it. (*Weeps.*)

Rag. (*Weeping.*) Boss, she could not bear it.

Old B. It is very touching. Ragenbag. (*Aside.*) And she's very good-looking, especially in tears. Go on, Madam.

Mrs. W. Oh! sir, imagine if you can the desolate soul doomed to everlasting servitude—no hope, no heaven, no relief!

Rag. (*Sadly.*) No relief, boss.

Old B. None whatever, Ragenbag, save in a Chicago divorce.

Mrs. W. A divorce! And were I to seek justice in a court, what would be the response from heartless men, our masters?

Old B. Blessed if I know—do you, Ragenbag?

Rag. None whatsoever.

Mrs. W. I took my fate in my own hand—I fled. My affinity wrote me from this place. I came, but oh heavens! not to find him. Thinking you might know some way out of this fearful labyrinth of lost hope, I

throw myself upon your mercy. I ask, I beg, I plead your gentle protection. (*To RAGENBAG.*) Are you a father?

Rag. Not much.

Mrs. W. (*To OLD BROWN.*) Are you a father?

Old B. I am.

Mrs. W. Then as a father I appeal to you. You will shield and protect me.

Old B. I will. Ragenbag, we will shield and protect—

Rag. We will, gov'nor—

Old B. Die defending injured innocence.

Rag. Die in our tracks.

Servant. (*Outside.*) You can't come in, sir.

Mr. W. I will go in. Get out of my way, you fellow.

Mrs. W. Oh, heavens! My husband! Where shall I fly? Hide me—protect me—he is mad with jealousy! (*Rushes into room.*)

Enter WILD pushing servant.)

Mr. W. Can't come in? I'll see if I can't.

Old B. And who are you, sir?

Mr. W. Me, sir—me, sir? I'm an injured husband, sir. I am threatened with emotional insanity. Beware!

Old B. And do you know who I am, sir?

Mr. W. No, I don't.

Old B. I am James Brown, Esq., proprietor of these premises, and I'd like to know—

Mr. W. Ah, ha! You're J. B., are you? You're "my sweet James," "adoring James"—you hoary-headed villain!

Old B. Sir!

Mr. W. Don't interrupt me—I feel the fit coming on. I'll murder you in a minute.

Old B. This is an infernal outrage! Will you please tell me—

Mr. W. Of course I will. Reason, hold your own while I tell this aged seducer of wives his villainy. My wife is a fool, sir, a sentimental fool—a poetic fool. We didn't agree. What of that? What married pair does agree? She suddenly left my bed and board. I found a note from her—I found several notes to her—letters, sir, love-letters dated at this town and signed J. B.—your loving James. I came here, sir—I came with two detectives. Two detectives examined directory and found the J. B.—James Brown—you, sir—you! Reason, hold your own. More, sir. Detectives tracked her to this house. I saw her myself—lace shawl, yellow hat and feather. Think I don't know them? Cost me twenty dollars. Now, before I go mad, you aged seducer, where's my wife? (*While he is talking, OLD B. is erecting a barricade of tables and chairs before him.*)

Old B. How do I know?

Mr. W. She's here—she's on these premises—the premises of James Brown, Esq.

Old B. No, she is n't.

Rag. Hold hard, boss, do n't lie.

Old B. (*Aside to RAG.*) Would you have me murdered!

Rag. Never mind that. What's death to veracity?

Mr. W. Where is she, you whited sepulchers—you aged villains?

Rag. Do n't be abusive, young man. Your wife is in this room.

Old B. Oh Lord!

Mr. W. Let me at her!

Rag. No, you do n't. We do n't allow no obstreperous conduct in this house, an' we've had about enough uv your noise.

Mr. W. Do you dare stand in my way?

Rag. Uv course.

Mr. W. Do you see that, wretched man. (*Presenting revolver.*) That is a Colt, and carries four chambers of death.

Rag. I see that an' go one better. (*Presenting pistol.*) That is a hoss. Now ef you do n't drop that instrument there'll be a sudden death in yer family.

Mr. W. Am I to be baffled thus of my revenge?

No! I'll kill the hoary-headed seducer. (*Turning, sees OLD B., stealing out.*) Flies from me! Whoop! Now, I'm mad! (*Rushes after. RAG. follows. Four shots heard, and then a heavy explosion from horse pistol.*)

Enter, screaming MERELDA, MRS. RAVEN WILD, SUSAN and JAMES.

Merelda. What is the meaning of this? James, where is my father?

James. (*Getting on a chair.*) Miss, he's making about the best time, for an old gentleman, down the main walk that I ever saw. Emotional Insanity is gaining on him, and old Rags fetches up the rear. Two to one on Emotional Insanity! Now its neck and neck—old Rags spurts and closes on them! They have tumbled into the bower and unearthed the Colonel! He jockeys on Emotional Insanity! Now they come at a tremendous pace! A blanket would cover the entire party. Your father spurts—he takes the lead! Ten to one on paternal! Here he is on the home stretch. Whoop, hurrah!

Enter OLD B., who throws himself breathless upon the sofa, followed by COLONEL BANGS, holding on to WILD. After, enter OLD RAGENBAG.

Col. B. (*Throwing off WILD.*) There, you hound! What does all this mean?

Mrs. W. (*Throwing herself on COLONEL B.*) Take me, protect me!

Col. B. (*Seating her abruptly in a chair.*) Certainly, I'll protect you! I'll protect any body—I'll protect every body! But I would like to know what all this is about.

Mr. W. She calls on you for protection. Perhaps you are my man. Did you write these letters? (*Showing letters.*)

James. Hello! Let me see them. Why, what are you doing with my love-letters?

Mr. W. Yours?

James. Yes, mine, Emotional Insanity—and not addressed to you, either.

Susan. What, Mr. Jim!

James (*Aside to SUSAN.*) Hush! I'm executing a flank movement to extricate my Colonel.

Mr. W. Now, Mrs. Wild, if you have any sense left in your idiotic head, will you tell me which of these gentlemen you eloped with?

Mrs. W. Why, none of them. I fled alone from your brutality, as I wrote you. I came here in search of one who once said he loved; but, alas! he disowns me.

Mr. W. And who wrote these letters?

Mrs. W. I'm sure I don't know. This gentleman says he did.

James. Yes, and I'd like to know how you, or your wife either, got hold of them.

Mr. W. Well, are you going back with me after this wild-goose chase?

Mrs. W. Well, I suppose so, you brute. And if you do n't treat me better I'll turn woman's rights, and lecture. There now!

Old B. Colonel, you have saved my life threatened by these lunatics. I forgive you, nay, I do more, I give you my daughter. Bless you, my children!

Rag. Amen! Now, boss, shall we go on in the cause of truth?

Old B. No, my Christian friend, I have had truth enough to do me the rest of my natural life. I find by experience that a little lying is necessary to oil the wheels of civilized society. It is only among wild Indians and Friend Quakers that the truth is common, and it is dangerous with one and very disagreeable with the other.

BLANNERHASSETT'S ISLAND.

CHARACTERS.

AARON BURR. .

HARMAN BLANNERHASSETT, English gentleman, wealthy and scholarly, living a secluded but luxurious life on an island of the Ohio river.

MRS. BLANNERHASSETT, beautiful and cultured.

WOLF, a renegade. Victor Brady, an old lover of Mrs. Blennerhassett's.

BARBARA DAIR, discarded love of Burr's. Enoch Brand, a government messenger.

CAPTAIN WILKINSON, commanding United States troops.

MIKE FINK, }
"OLD GETTYSBURG," } boatmen.

MAHALA, Indian girl.

SCIPIO, Blennerhassett's colored servant.

Soldiers, hunters, boatmen, regulators and messengers.

ACT I.

SCENE: portion of Blennerhassett's Island, giving the lawn in front of house and view of the river. The house is large but rustic, built of logs with porch having trunks of trees for columns to support roof made of clap-boards held down by poles.

As the curtain rises a chorus of men is heard approaching as if rowing.

" Oh, ho! boatmen, row,
We're floating on the waters of the O-hi-o."

Enter OLD GET, MIKE FINK, *and others carrying deer.*

Old Get. There boys, take the carcass to the Colonel's kitchen and tell that son of Satan, the cook, to throw us enough for supper.

Hunters. All right, Get. (*They carry off deer and return.*)

Old Get. We'll get more sass than venison I guess. I'd like to take that nigger by the scruff of his neck and the seat of his breeches and just pitch him into hell fire, I would!

Mike. Seein' he aint your nigger, old man, the owner might think you was takin' liberties and that would hurt his feelin's.

Old Get. Col. Blennerhassett is a mighty good man, but he keeps the meanest niggers—the most ornery critters ever sot on end. For my part I'm glad we're goin' to haul off to-morrow. I can't stand sass generally, but sass from a nigger riles my bile till I am ready to bite.

First Hunter. Do you know, old man, whar we're goin' to?

Old Get. Sonny, I haint the remotest idea. They tells us we' uns air emigrants goin' to settle Col. Burr's land.

Mike. Well that's good to tell the women, children, and weak-minded critters, but I know a thing or two.

First Hunter. Tell us all you know.

Old Get. Now boys ef you set that young man to tellin' all he knows we won't get off this island for a year, and not then ef he aint exhausted.

First Hunter. Oh, you make too much noise with your mouth. Go on, Mike.

Mike. Well, then, it aint common to drill men in platoons to settle new land nor to fight Injuns. Now, is it?

Hunters. No it aint.

Mike. Well, aint we bein' drilled by Colonel Burr, night and day—now, aint that so?

Hunters. It air, it air.

Mike. Well, then, enny damned fool would know—why Old Get here would know—that something's up besides settlin' land and settlin' Injuns.

Old Get. Oh, you're too damned smart you air, aint it necessary to have soldiers to fight Injuns?

Mike. No, it just aint—soldier fightin' is by platoon, and Injun fightin' is for every feller to keep his eye skinned and hug the trees. Now, aint that so?

Hunters. It air, it air.

Old Get. Oh, much you know! My father fit in the revolution and I fit—

Mike. Oh, thunder! What's that got to do with it? But I know something else. You know them big boxes in the bottom of our broad horn?

Hunters. We does—we does.

Mike. Well, the head of one marked “bacon” got knocked off, and I saw the muzzle of the biggest gun ever made. Why, a feller could put his head in it. Least-wise, Old Get could put his in easy. Is them guns for Injuns, boys? I reckon not.

Old Get. What do you know about big guns? Let me tell you about a gun—

Mike. There, boys—come here; Old Get is preparin’—Old Get’s goin’ to bust a big gun on us.

Old Get. What I’m goin’ to tell you is God’s truth, jist to show ye what ye do n’t know about guns.

Mike. Pole her off, pole her off, old warrior.

Old Get. Whin I was in Gettysburg I was ridin’ home on my mare, Sunflower, when the awfulest storm come up ever known in thim parts. I jist happened to know of an old cannon on the side of the road that was left by the British in the Revolution, and I jist rode my mare into the mouth of it.

(*The hunters hold up their hands and whistle.*)

Mike. Hold on, hold on; take a turn around a root, the old man aint under way yet.

Old Get. Well, it got as dark as midnight, and the flashes of lightnin’ clean blinded a feller. While I was waitin’ the stage coach came tearin’ along, and I be damned if the driver did n’t drive helter-split right into

the mouth of the cannon and killed his two leaders agin the lower eend.

Mike. And how did you escape?

Old Get. Escape? Whin I heard the thing thunderin' in, I jist realized the danger quick as wink, and I put spurs to Sunflower and leaped her out at the touch hole.

Mike. Give him the honors, boys; give him the honors. That's the biggest lie yet.

Enter SCIP.

Scip. De grub foh de' common white trash is now pre-pahed. (*Exeunt all.*)

Mike. (*Following.*) If that aged African do n't strike a snag before long, I do n't know the nature of the river hereabouts.

Enter MR. and MRS. BLENNERHASSETT.

Mrs. Blen. These hunting expeditions are so perilous, my love, that I count the hours in dread till your return. But I can not bid you stay, for hunting is your only occupation and amusement.

Blen. Shooting game and being shot at by Indians make rather an exciting life. It is selfish of me, for it leaves you all alone at home.

Mrs. Blen. Not all alone; I have my love of you ever with me—truest, bravest, and most generous of men. But for your danger I would be well content.

Blen. I fear you deceive me, dearest, or deceive

yourself. I see you changing day by day. The smile you greet me with is one of patience, resignation, not of joy. Small wonder, though; these wilds and wilder settlers are not the scenes and people my peerless love was born to grace.

Mrs. Blen. Not that, my own, not that. I have no thought of or care for the vain life I put behind me.

Blen. What! my love?

Mrs. Blen. We have escaped detraction—escaped the mocking eye of men and the stinging tongue of women—but Oh! my heart, our sin we carry to the wilderness and is ever with us. Waking or dreaming, I see the home I made desolate, the husband I betrayed.

Blen. These thoughts are morbid, love. The home you left was never home to you. The husband you fled from was but a brute. I see this solitary life, this brooding wilderness, makes you ill. And that reminds me, pet, this Colonel Burr offers to us a change. He begs us to accompany him in his expedition.

Mrs. Blen. Something within bids me fear this man. He is so subtle, polished, calm. There is no impulse in him, and his honeyed words seem prompted by design his words conceal.

Blen. We have lived so long among rough men a gentleman appears unnatural and therefore suspicious. Hush, he approaches.

Enter AARON BURR.

Burr. (*After a pause—looking off.*) I do not wonder, that you, my friend, are fascinated with this lovely home. See where rosy evening nestles in the arms of night, while the flowing river turns to waves of gold and the rich autumnal tints of wooded banks make earth a part of heaven. The world seems fresh from God's own hand unmarred by man's abusive waste.

Blen. One wearies of the sameness after a time.

Burr. That is true. The great Johnson tells us how Rassalas tired of the happy valley, and I believe had Adam and Eve been Yankees they would not have waited for the Lord to turn them from the garden of Eden; they would have emigrated long before and gone to speculating in wild lands. After all, human life and human effort are necessities to us.

Mrs. Blen. We have our human life, Colonel, never fear. This paradise is a refuge for criminals escaping conviction and convicts escaping punishment. Why, even red-handed murder with the mark of Cain comes to us.

Blen. My wife has a sharp tongue for our lower settlement. You must pardon her.

Burr. God never placed an angel to guard a sacred place without arming her with a flaming sword.

Enter BARBARA DAIR disguised as a government messenger.

Blen. Whom have we here?

Barb. Mr. Blennerhassett?

Blen. At your service.

Barb. I am a government messenger in search of Colonel Burr.

Burr. You find him here, my boy. What have you for me?

Barb. This package of papers sent you through the care of the War Department.

Burr. Thanks, my lad. Will madam pardon me?
(*Takes papers and retires up the stage.*)

Barb. And these for Mr. and Mistress Blennerhassett.

Blen. You are welcome, Mr. Messenger, to our island. (*Taking letters.*) Go in, and Scip will see that you are cared for. (*Blennerhasset and wife open letters.*)

Barb. (*Aside as she enters house.*) The devil did not know me in this disguise. I'll have my vengeance yet!

Blen. What brings the mail to you, my love?

Mrs. Blen. A gossip's letter from the world we left behind. The one friend who knows of our retreat writes that Victor fell in a tavern brawl so badly wounded that he is not expected to survive. He may be dead and I can be your wife indeed.

Blen. I hope so, what is the date of your letter?

Mrs. Blen. I had not looked at that. Why, it has been some eight months reaching here. I may be free.

Blen. God send it may be so. Ill news flies swiftly,

while good news lags like a lazy summer. I have a confidential letter here from our friend, Governor Morris, who introduced to us Colonel Burr, he writes (*reads*): "I feel it my duty, old friend, having introduced the devil to your paradise, to warn you of your peril. It is whispered here that he is in some conspiracy against the government. I do not believe this; at the same time his operations in the wild West are mysterious, so suspicious, indeed, that the government has sent Captain Wilkinson with a force to inquire into his movements, and, if necessary, arrest him. Do n't get yourself involved in any of his schemes, whatever they may be. He is as insinuating, selfish, and unscrupulous as Satan. Above all, keep guard when petticoats are about—a word to the wise."

Mrs. Blen. No need of such a warning to a woman. My better instincts read the man aright when first we met. I detest him.

Blen. Hush—he is near.

Burr. - (*Coming forward. Aside.*) And so Tom Jefferson sends an officer and guard for my arrest. He will execute such order at his peril. Where could I have seen that face and heard that voice. They haunt me like a troubled dream.

Blen. I gather, Colonel, from your troubled look that you have grave news.

Burr. Not at all. Our good president is somewhat

anxious over my expedition. The author of revolution himself, he is jealous of a like right in others. I have given you my confidence, noble friend, and here are the papers unfolding all our plans and hopes. I hope they will meet your approbation. (*Gives papers as BARBARA steals in unobserved. Enter OLD GET.*)

Old Get. By the holy Moses, we've got him—we've got him!

Blen. Got who?

Old Get. The head devil himself.

Burr. My excited friend, such victory is worse than defeat. To get the devil is to gain a loss.

Blen. Will you tell us what you mean?

Old Get. I mean the boys have captured Wolf, the renegade—got him fast.

Blen. Was there much loss of life? Did he resist desperately?

Old Get. Bless your soul, resist! He first took the boys, and then the cuss surrendered.

Blen. How so? Confound it, man; will you stop jumping, and tell us coherently what you mean?

Old Get. Sartin I will—sartin. The boys had settled for supper. They put their guns agin an oak, lit a fire, and went to cookin', when all of a suddint Wolf, the cuss, stepped in betwixt 'em and their guns with a thunderin' big pistol in each hand, and told 'em to surrender. Lord!

but things looked ugly for us, 'cause the boys thought he had a hundred redskins at his back ready to jump an' yell, and so they sot still and looked like geese before thunder.

Blen. And then?

Old Get. He told 'em jist as quiet and as cool as the devil that he'd surrender if they'd agree to fetch him here. They was only too willin', and they gave their honor, and they's acrossin' the river with the skunk this minute. There they are.

Enter MIKE FINK and crowd with WOLF bound.

Fink. Here he is—here's the renegade and scalper; got him sure.

Crowd. Hang him! hang him—

Mrs. Blen. Oh! Harman, don't—do n't let them harm him here before my very eyes!

Blen. The man's a murderer—a cruel butcher and deserves death.

Mrs. Blen. Oh! no, not now—not now—Oh, please save him! I can not bear it—it will kill me.

Blen. Hold there. He must have a trial first.

Fink. Damn a trial—he did not give the people he killed a trial.

Crowd. Hang him! Hang him!

Blen. Stand back I say!

Mrs. Blen. Oh, Colonel Burr, help us save him!

Burr. (*Seizing a pistol from regulator.*) Here, you

men of my command, stand back (*placing himself between WOLF and crowd*). The man who stirs is dead.

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE: Same as in first act. MIKE FINK, OLD GET, and others discovered.

Fink. I say, fellows, he's got to hang!

Old Get. Them's my sentiments.

Fink. It's bad enough for an Injun to slaughter and scalp, but when it comes to a white man he ought to be skinned alive and hung in a smoke house.

Old Get. Them's my sentiments.

Fink. Why, boys, he's taught the redskins how to fight; he's a gineral among the devils, and shows 'em how to spread in an ambush and swing in behind and attack and retreat as good as Old Wayne—damn him!

Crowd. Damn him!

Old Get. Have you heard the news, boys—ten thousand United States troops landed at Marietta last night.

Fink. Oh, get out!

Old Get. Fact, Fink. Saw 'em land; Gineral Wilkin-sin is in command; he's a seven-footer if an inch—carries a sword that takes ten men to buckle on.

Fink. Get, you are the biggest liar unchanged.

Old Get. Fact, Fink. Talk of officers! When I lived in Gettysburg an officer come along recruitin'. I tell you what—he was a bully buster. Why, that man weighed—

Fink. Now, Get, hold hard; take a turn on a saplin'. You 've got a little character left—do n t throw it away on a few tons.

Old Get. Well, he weighed nigh onto a ton. Fact, Fink.

Fink. Well, we 'll agree on that, but not a ton more.

Crowd. No, not a pound!

Old Get. He was a mighty active man, though, for all he was so big. Why, one day the powder mill near Gettysburg took fire. The Ginerall says, says he, "Old man it won't do to let the town be destroyed—come on." We was about a mile off, and we was neck and neck, the Ginerall a little ahead. We got there in jist no time. All the men had run away, jist skeered to death, and the powder was explodin' like hot thunder. It was so deafenin' you could n't hear yourself think. But we went in, I tell you, and tromped out forty barrels apiece afore we got the thing under control and saved the town.

Fink. Oh, Get! forty barrels?

Old Get. Fact, Fink.

Fink. Come, boys, let's rig a purchase to hang the renegade. (*As they go out WILKINSON and BARBARA enter.*)

Wil. This letter from the secretary of war tells me

not only to confide in but advise with you, boy. I must say the government has selected a very youthful adviser. Are you sure this credential does not belong to some older person? You will pardon my doubts, but my mission is too delicate and important to be risked by a blunder. Are you Enoch Brand?

Barb. No, Captain, that is not my name.

Wil. I thought as much. Then, how came you by this confidential letter?

Barb. It was given me by the President.

Wil. This is a strange riddle my boy, you will excuse a blunt soldier, but it is my belief that you are lying. You stole this paper.

Barb. It is necessary, Captain, to accomplish the one task we both are commissioned to execute that we should have confidence in each other.

Wil. You have certainly a manly way of talking, boy.

Barb. Captain, I throw myself upon your better judgment. I am not Enoch Brand. I am not a boy. My name is Barbara Dair, and Aaron Burr, the man I seek to punish, is my destroyer.

Wil. Why, this is amazing—and the government commissions you to aid and advise me?

Barb. Even so. The President knows that my commission is from God. He but indorses that. I follow this man as retribution tracks the steps of crime.

Wil. He, this Colonel Burr, has wronged you?

Barb. Most foully. I was innocent and happy when he crossed my path, and when he had won my heart he cast me aside as he would a blighted flower. The flower retains its thorn even in death.

Wil. I feel sorry for you, girl; sorry for your loss, and yet more sorry for the task you have assumed. And how do you propose to aid me? My instructions are to arrest Burr, but not without clear proof of his treason. This throws a heavy weight of responsibility upon me. The man is a devil, cautious and cunning as he is bold.

Barb. I believe I see the way. Burr seeks to gain this Blennerhassett to his cause. He needs the money, for the owner of this home is rich, and he loves the pretty wife. He confides in Blennerhassett; has given him in writing all his plans—all, I believe, that implicate the men associated with him in his treason. Could we but get those papers—

Wil. I see—I see. What sort of a man is Blennerhassett?

Barb. A gentleman.

Wil. A gentleman? That I believe makes the very worst material to work upon. He will hold that confidence as he holds his honor, and his honor above his life.

Barb. His honor, Captain, is not altogether in his keeping. This wife he dotes upon has much the larger trust, and Burr will undermine all that.

Wil. What! Risk his all—character, trust, life itself, for a pretty woman?

Barb. It is his one weak spot. Were the crown of England within his grasp he'd turn aside to dally with a love. Leave him to me until I hold the proofs. There come the puppets and the man himself.

Enter BLENNERHASSETT, MRS. BLENNERHASSETT,
and BURR.

Blen. You are most welcome to our island home, Captain! Permit me to present my wife; Colonel Burr, I believe, you have met before.

Burr. And glad, sir, to take your hand again. Time, like a trusty friend, deals kindly by you, Captain.

Wil. I thank you, Colonel. It does seem strange to meet so famed a soldier and renowned statesman in such a wilderness as this.

Burr. You must not call a garden, guarded by such an angel, a wilderness, Captain.

Wil. (*Aside.*) The oily-tongued devil! And I am expected to out-scheme and arrest him. (*Aloud.*) It seems attractive enough to make you linger here. I understood your immigration scheme is quite perfected.

Burr. We need a few more frosts, my friend, to insure us health.

Blen. Now, Captain, what can we do for you and your troops to make your brief stay pleasant?

Wil. I only ask a camping ground, if you will be kind enough to designate the spot that will least disturb your princely home.

Blen. With pleasure. This way.

Exeunt CAPTAIN WILKINSON, BLENNERHASSETT, BURR,
and BARBARA. *Enter guard.*

Guard. The renegade, Wolf, madam, wants to speak with you.

Mrs. Blen. Wants to speak with me? Well, conduct him here. (*Exit guard.*)

Mrs. Blen. Poor doomed man, doubtless he seeks further aid from me, and aid I can not give. I saved him from the cruel mob only to have him die by a drum-head court-martial.

Enter WOLF, bound, between two guards.

Mrs. Blen. You wish to speak to me?

Wolf. If you will trust me, fair lady, and bid these watch dogs step aside. Never fear, I pledge my word of honor as a gentleman to take no advantage of your kindness.

Mrs. Blen. Leave us alone, good friends. Be at ease, I will answer for his security. You can rest the while, and Scipio will give you refreshments in the kitchen. (*Exit guards.*)

Wolf. These soldiers obey you better than did the beastly mob of boatmen and regulators. (*After a pause.*)

You do not know me in this guise and place. Have these short years so changed my face that it has grown strange? I thought when you were pleading for my worthless life you recognized the victim.

Mrs. Blen. I? No, I did not know you; nor do I know you now. I plead for you in peril of your life as I would have plead for the meanest animal threatened with a cruel death.

BARBARA steals in listening.

Wolf. Can it be, Clara, that my very voice is lost to you?

Mrs. Blen. Great heavens, Victor Brady!—you alive and here! (*Staggers back.*)

Wolf. Be firm. Be quiet. Time is brief with me. Lean against this oak. I am doomed to die at early dawn to-morrow, and I have something to communicate that it is well for you to hear. Will you hear?

Mrs. Blen. (*Faintly.*) Go on.

Wolf. When I recovered from my wound, got in a drunken brawl, I followed you across the seas—tracked you to your hiding, with hell in my heart. I had no thought by day or dream at night but vengeance on my enemy who stole you from me.

Mrs. Blen. But Victor—

Wolf. I know—I know—You would say I was a beast, and stole your child away.

Mrs. Blen. My child, my poor Mary!

Wolf. Hush, hear me, 'tis of that I'd speak. For months I have haunted this river, brooding upon my revenge, hoping for the opportunity to kill you both, and I could have slain you both ere this; I have had you pass me on your steed; I have been hid in the wood when your lover hunting passed within range of my good rifle; but I could not be satisfied unless you knew the hand that dealt the fatal blow. This stealthy watching gave me among my Indian friends the name of Wolf.

Mrs. Blen. And you grew to be cruel as the savages?

Wolf. Speak them fair, my girl, speak them fair! These simple children of the wood are gentlemen, loyal and true. They forget no favors and forgive no wrong. The little good I've done in life was aiding them against these cut-throats and thieves called settlers.

Mrs. Blen. But my child, my child, Victor! Tell me of my child.

Wolf. Yes, 'tis she I would restore to you. Hear me; living this life beneath the open sky, removed from all the evils of my early life, a change came over me and my sense of wrong died out. I surrendered that I might face you both and have an end of it.

Mrs. Blen. But did you not know that such surrender would be death?

Wolf. What matter—I was weary of life—

Mrs. Blen. Our child, Victor—

Wolf. Since you saved me for a little time I would prolong the respite that I might enable you to again possess—

Mrs. Blen. Oh! Victor tell me! I will traverse the earth on foot to get my child again—

Wolf. I left my papers in the keeping of my Indian friends. Without them your search would be useless. Could I escape—

Mrs. Blen. (*Unbinding Wolf.*) Yes—Yes, steal through the garden to the water edge. There you will find a boat built for me. Drop down the river under cover of the willows on this bank, then row across.

Enter BARBARA.

Barb. Not so—not so. The soldiers going into camp are in your way. They can not fail to see you; pull boldly for the further shore, it is your only hope.

Wolf. Thank you, my lad. (*Exit.*)

Mrs. Blen. He must be seen—he can not escape!

Barb. Never fear; the idlers are gazing at the soldiers going into camp. All the boats are on the further end of the island—ah! I see him. Brave man, he rows quietly along with no show of hurry in his efforts.

Mrs. Blen. I can not look upon him.

Barb. Every second sends the light craft further on its way. (*A cry is heard.*) Hark! He is recognized.

(*The cries increase.*) Ah, now he pulls for life! (*Shouts heard.*) They are firing on him from the camp. The shots strike the water all about him. (*More shots.*) Ah! God, he's down—No, he's up again! He pulls as if hurt—He's beyond range! He gains the shore. He staggers slowly up the bank. He is gone.

Mrs. Blen. (*Falling to her knees.*) Thank God!

(*The long roll is heard as the curtain descends.*)

ACT III.

SCENE: Same as 1st act. BLANNERHASSETT and BURR.

Blen. I have but glanced at the papers you gave me to read. I have learned enough, however, to realize the magnitude of what you propose—Mexico and Louisiana united in one kingdom. It seems to me the force you have is quite inadequate to compass so great a scheme.

Burr. It is not the head but the heart that makes the effort potent. It is not the handful of common men upon a raft that troubles the Government at Washington and makes the country tremble. It is Aaron Burr. The name that fills the land I leave with vague anxiety fills the land I seek with hope. I am to this new land of ours what Napoleon is to Europe.

Blen. Pardon me, Colonel, while I admit the force of

what you say, yet will not this proposition of a kingdom in this day of republics be a grave obstacle to your success?

Burr. My friend, a republic which means the equality of men made unequal by nature is a dream of lunatics. It is called self government, and at what period did a man govern himself?

Blen. But the world progresses, Colonel.

Burr. Not in that direction. In a barbarous age, when a man conquered his enemy he killed and ate him. After a time he progressed; he conquered and enslaved him. Then came what we are pleased to call civilization, and while one class became masters under the feudal system another sunk into slaves. The few fatten in idleness, while the many labor to live on a bare subsistence. Why, in this vaunted republic, my patriotic friend, the great leader—a very giant among pigmies, this French-American, His Excellency—while preaching the equality of all men, lives on unrequited toil, has slaves to watch his face, to do untold his bidding as he wakes and fan his lordly brow when lost in sleep.

Blen. But these are negroes.

Burr. Yes, they are only negroes. In France they are only peasants, and in Prussia, serfs. Let us be consistent in this age of reason. If George Washington could be soothed to sleep by music made by whipping slaves, let

us not blame the eastern monarch for his bath of human blood, or the dainty aristocrats of France, whose delicate gloves are tanned skins of men.

Blen. You think these slaves should be made citizens?

Burr. I think, to be consistent, we should make the masters citizens. We can not have all men born equal where one can be born to a thousand slaves.

Blen. Or a thousand acres?

Burr. We make a distinction between property in dead matter and property in man. Our Virginia philosopher, who does not believe in God and does believe in Tom Jefferson, has caught from France the choice phrases that he tosses in our eyes as a showman does balls and knives to vulgar fooling. We have gone to sea in a bowl. We are bid to hope for a political impossibility. Look about you, man! Where do we find in all creation this thing called self-government? From the brutes up to the great Creator might is right. God allows of no republic. It is the law of our being that the fool may do for the wise man what the wise man can not do for himself—govern him.

Blen. These are heterodox opinions, Colonel.

Burr. None the less true on that account. This scheme of self-government carries in itself its seeds of destruction. One corner is slavery; the other the corporation. We have dethroned the well-born to give place to

vulgar wealth. All men are born equal, provided they are born white; and there shall be no inequality before the law, save that which is embodied in a corporation.

Blen. I beg your pardon, Colonel; I do not comprehend this that you call a corporation.

Burr. The soulless thing created by law that may amass wealth and live forever. It is a cloud no bigger than your hand. We shall not die before that cloud shall cover the heavens and spread desolation over the earth. Before it this thing of shreds and patches called a constitution, with its nicely adjusted checks and balances, will be wrecked like a boy's kite in a storm, and become a thing for men to laugh at. It is all in vain, my friend. What the people gain through violence they lose through fraud, and that with their own consent. The iron hand of greed has a velvet glove and fondles while it feels for power.

Blen. Pardon me a seeming idle curiosity—it is not idle. I am tempted to take part in this daring scheme. Before I do, however, I seek to know all there is to know on what you found your hopes.

Burr. I am glad to know this, my friend. A man of your ability and wealth should not be buried in this wilderness. A wide and noble career is offered you, and you will find on looking over the papers I entrusted to your honor that the journals of Europe, alarmed by the trouble

in France that gets countenance from our Yankee republic, favor a dismemberment of the states and building at the South a monarchy to hold in check the wild insanity of these republicans. Now I must take my leave with a long ride to meet some friends at Marietta. *Au revoir*, my excellent friend—when we again meet, may we meet as allies. (*Exit.*)

Enter MRS. BLENNERHASSETT *in riding dress, followed by*
BARBARA.

Blen. Ah! You're for a ride I see.

Mrs. Blen. Yes; Colonel Burr invites me to be his guide a short distance on his road to Marietta.

Blen. Why, this is something novel—why, since when have you become so intimate?

Barb. (*Aside.*) Jealous is he?

Mrs. Blen. My conduct has been rude and I repent me of it. This gentleman is our guest, and as such I strive to look upon and treat him.

Blen. And I will see him mounted and the boat manned to row you over. (*Exit.*)

Mrs. Blen. (*To BARBARA.*) Well, well, what have you to report?

Barb. We found the boat adrift and stained with blood. Beneath the seat on which he sat and rowed for life there was quite a pool. I sent back the man, and in this light boat of yours I rowed to where the stream we

told him of emptied in the river, and without much trouble found the sycamore, but no papers, and indeed no trace of any human being having been there.

Mrs. Blen. He was wounded, and may be dead, and every trace of my poor child lost forever! Will you try once more? If alive he will keep his promise though he has to crawl. Stay—I will write a note that you may leave—will you?

Barb. With pleasure, madam. (*Mrs. BLENNERHASSETT enters house.*) Poor woman, born weak and born to suffer. If I can only get possession of those papers held by her husband, one of earth's devils will come to punishment that is death and disgrace in one. But how—in what manner to go about it. Let me think. (*Walks up the stage.*)

Enter MAHALA, FINK, and OLD GET.

Fink. Starboard your stern—starboard your stern; you're comin bows on aboard me.

Mahala. Well, get out then, I don't want to get aboard I can tell you.

Old Get. Stand back—stand back, and give the old man a chance.

Mahala. Go away both of you. I never see two such ridiculous men—never in all my life.

Old Get. Oh, you dog-wood blossom, you wild plum, come to my arms.

Fink. Do hear his old bones rattle! I'm your feller. Take a turn round my corpus and tie to me.

Old Get. Oh! Go 'way—wimmen is scarce in this neck of woods, and good men—real good old reliable men—aunt plenty. I tell you, Mahaly, when I was in Gettysburg, wimmen lit into me like butterflies on a sunflower.

Fink. Oh, get out!

Old Get. Fact, Fink.

Mahala. I wish you'd a' stayed there.

Fink. Hear that, you old chestnut. I'm the winnin man on this occasion.

Mahala. Oh! Get out—I would n't touch you with a ten-foot pole.

Fink. Young female, you're a takin' on furrin airs and graces, you air. The next trip I make down in the Sally-Ann I'll fetch a load of lovely females from Pittsburgh, and then you'll sing small, you will!

Mahala. (*Snapping her fingers.*) That for your lovely females. I'd like to see the girl'd take you for company, nor you, you old bald-headed, snaggle-toothed scolly jumper! (*Exit.*)

Old Get. Whew! What a scratch cat. I tell you, Fink, this scarcity of wimmin is a spoilen of 'em. The feller's aint right in their minds. Why a gang of us came across an old sun bonnet in the woods, and we gave three

cheers and formed a ring and danced and squealed 'round like mad.

Fink. I feel that way myself. I never knowed afore the power of petticoats. We've got to look after that trade; as Rout Out & Co. says at Pittsburgh, fetch the supply up to the demand. Ef I do n't fetch down a load of gals I'm a mink.

Old Get. And throw in a few likely widders, Fink,—widders is mighty takin'; would n't mind a gross of 'em myself. Do n't forget the widders, Fink.

Fink. I'll bear in mind, old snowflake. But what's this talk about the regulators going for us here because of the escape of Wolf?

Old Get. There is such talk, Fink, and the settlers are mighty stirred up about it. You see that massacre at Big Sandy aint forgot in a hurry, and they do say that the regulators are gettin' a force ready to come down and clear out this island.

Fink. Well, I can't say that I anger up at their bein' mad. It was enough to make a man snortin' mad to see his friends and neighbors ambushed, killed and scalped, but what the devil has folks here got to do with it?

Old Get. There's some curious stories goin' about. It is said that the Colonel's woman sent the guards off to drink, and Abe Anker is ready to swear he saw her going on over the renegade and untie him.

Fink. Abe Anker aint as big a liar as you, Get, but he's close where you're steerin' in that line. I would n't believe it on his affidavy 'specially ef you swore to it, too.

Old Get. This is a free country, Fink, and every man has a right to his opinion. Its your right as a free citizen to think what you please about my veracity—I aint gain'sain' that. But do n't be a fool, Fink.

Fink. I was n't branded cast-steel for that, so do n't feel oneasy touchin' my foolishness. But pole on, pole on, partner.

Old Get. Ef she did n't untie the renegade how did he get loose, and how did he know about her boat and its oars, eh? Answer me them questions, Mr. Solomon.

Fink. Well, I must say there's snags about and a few eddies; but there's one thing I can say to them regulators—they'd better time their visit here after our Red Run expedition gets off. Ef they do n't they run on a few snags that are tiptop sawyers, I can tell you.

Old Get. I'm with you there, Fink; but, its long between drinks, partner. Let's adjourn to the broad horn and try that corn-juice.

Fink. Agreed. (*Exeunt.*)

Enter MRS. BLENNERHASSETT.

Mrs. Blen. Now, please do n't fail me, boy; if my—this man I mean—were to die without giving me a clue I

would be doomed to a life of torture. (*In taking note BARBARA drops it.*)

Barb. Trust me, madam.

Mrs. Blen. I do. May heaven serve you as you serve a wretched mother! (*Exit.*)

Barb. Poor woman. What helpless playthings we are in the hands of men, and how we pay with broken hearts for their amusement. There is one, at least, I doom to death. Those papers—could I but gain that proof, the task were easy. (*Exit.*)

Enter BLENNERHASSETT.

Blen. A strange depression weighs me down. This hazy sun of autumn, with the gorgeous drapery of the dying woods I have so loved, seems to me the sunlight of a cemetery. I can not understand this sudden intimacy with Colonel Burr. Last night my more than wife awoke me by her weeping. She wearies of this solitude. Can it be this fascinating villian, this man whose oily tongue and polished ways win hearts in spite of reason, has come between us? The thought is madness, and yet why not? She left her husband, child, and home for me; why may she not in turn follow him? (*Picks up note mechanically.*) This were punishment I could not bear—What is this? (*reads*) “My heart is full of agonized suspense. You have aroused a love I thought dead. You promise to return my child. God bless you for the hope, and heaven

reward you. Such deed will wipe away your sins—yea, cleanse your hands of blood. Only grant me what you promise and I will give you all that is left of my wretched life." I see it all! This devil in human shape I have admitted to my house and home has won her through her mother love and seeks to have me embark in his wild schemes that he may have her by his side.

Enter BARBARA.

Barb. (*Aside.*) I have lost the note. (*Sees BLANNERHASSETT.*) Ah! sir, you seem disturbed. (*BLANNERHASSETT stares at her.*) Are you ill?

Blen. Aye, ill—ill—sick at heart! But what is that to you; go from me; why do you look upon me so strangely? Is my disease written upon my face—go, I say! Hold! Perhaps you know. In cases of this sort it is common for all to know the rot before the sufferer feels his wrong. Do you know what tortures me?

Barb. I believe I do.

Blen. Well, answer—what is it? Don't stand there with that look of pity on your face. Out with it, boy, or I shall choke it from you! (*Seizing her.*)

Barb. The disease from which you suffer is known to the world as Aaron Burr.

Blen. So I thought! Known is it—known to the world—and all these camp followers and ruffians have seen what I have not even suspected; and so my name

and trouble are tossed about camp-fires by vulgar lips for laughter and contempt, or worse than both, their pity.

Barb. There is no need thus to torture yourself by such exaggeration. But it does seem strange to me that a man wise as you should admit to your home a man against whom every door is closed, and upon whose Cain-marked brow the finger of public scorn is fixed.

Blen. True—most true.

Barb. What is there sacred that he respects, what law of God has he not violated? Brave as a soldier, brilliant as a statesman—so fascinating that he wins by looks where eloquence fails other men—his treachery has undone him! He is doomed.

Blen. Yes, yes; I fell a victim to his wiles. But now, while stealing from me all my heart holds dear, he trusts his honor and his life into my keeping. See, I hold here papers that, if given to the government, would doom him to a felon's death for treason—high treason.

Barb. And you keep faith with a man like this? Give me the papers; this officer is waiting here for proof; with these in hand your enemy, the country's foe, will be carried back in irons to die upon the scaffold.

Blen. Take them my boy. Such vengeance brings no relief to me, but it is well that he should die.

Barb. (*Aside.*) I have won. (*Seizing the papers.*)

Rest assured sir, more than one broken heart will rejoice over this man's fall. (*Exit.*)

(*BLANNERHASSETT seats himself and buries his face in his hands. MRS. BLANNERHASSETT approaches him and places her hand upon his shoulder.*)

Mrs. Blen. My love, I have a hideous secret to reveal to you.

Blen. (*Without looking up.*) So soon returned! You should have continued on and saved the telling of what I know—I know too well.

Mrs. Blen. Colonel Burr was met at the landing by a messenger with news that brought us back. I have resolved to confess to you a strange experience that has come to us.

Blen. Save yourself the shame of telling. I know it all without—(*Starting up.*) I was slow to learn, the very last to learn the shame the entire camp and country babbles of.

Mrs. Blen. Do not blame me, love. I sought to hide from you the misery of this event. I can not kill a mother's love; there is no hour of the weary day I do not see her little form—look in her gentle face, and when night comes I hear in sleep the patter of her tiny feet—the music of her voice, the pressure on my bosom of her gentle touch, and I awake to weep in utter wretchedness. Oh! Harman, he promises to restore my child—to give

her to these loving arms I stretch in vain to gather vacancy that holds but woe.

Blen. He promises! he is a treacherous villian—Why promises are cheap! He sought by promises such as these to win you from me. Thank God, I hold the scoundrel by the throat and a shameful death I promise him.

Mrs. Blen. You do mistake most strangely; he never sought to win my love nor I to give it him.

Blen. Hold! Add not to crime by lies. Is that your writing? (*Showing note.*)

Mrs. Blen. (*Faintly.*) Yes.

Blen. You pen such words to him—to this wretch whose life has been an infamy—and I abandoned home, friends, fortune and a future to bury like a fool my love and self in a wilderness for such a thing as this!

Mrs. Blen. I gave you all I had to give. And were I less a mother could you love me more?

Blen. And this love was to be bandied about, from one to another. It began with me and will end with the common herd. Paugh! It makes me sick.

Mrs. Blen. These are bitter words. Oh, Harman, hear me, be patient with me!

Blen. Patience! Great Heavens, and would you have me patient with my own dishonor—pander to my own disgrace! What sort of woman is this that before God I made my wife—into whose keeping I have placed my all in life!

Mrs. Blen. Alas, you will not listen. Oh, my love—
(*placing her hand upon his arm.*)

Blen. (*Throwing her off.*) Off, you strumpet! How dare you touch me with your polluted hand! Go join your new found love; he waits you now. Go—go to him, and by the great Creator I will put the rope around his worthless neck and you shall see him hanged.

(*She exits slowly, shrinking from him; he rushes back, sinks into a seat and buries his face in his hands. Enter BARBARA.*)

Barb. This officer when wanted most is absent from his post. I have left orders at his camp for a file of men to arrest this traitor.

Blen. (*Rising suddenly.*) I find no comfort here. He shall die by my own hand.

Barb. Better leave that to the hangman. The rope is woven and the scaffold built for the traitor Burr. Leave the law he has offended to do your work.

Blen. Too slow, too slow and all uncertain. I'll arm myself and shoot him where he stands. I'll send his treacherous soul to hell before his faction shall have time to rescue.

Barb. But sir—

Blen. Out of my way you spy! (*Throwing BARBARA aside and rushing into the house.*)

Barb. The man is crazed. Well, be it so; my enemy is punished either way.

Enter BURR.

Burr. Barbara (*she starts*), you do this masquerading remarkably well.

Barb. You know me, then!

Burr. My heart were dead indeed did I not see you through this thin disguise. You may stain the snowy skin and hide the roses, cut off with cruel shears your silken locks, put on a boy's attire, yet leave enough for me to know the sweetest woman heaven ever fashioned to fascinate a man.

Barb. Enough of that! I have learned to value these soft speeches at their real value.

Burr. And did you suppose, my girl, that you could change the winning sweetness of that voice, your grace of motion and those sparkling eyes because this vulgar demagogue—this French philosopher, Tom Jefferson, bids you try?

Barb. I have enough to suit my purpose. See (*showing package of papers*), I hold your life, you traitor to God, your government and me. I put the rope around your treacherous neck and send you swinging down to infamy.

Burr. Are those my love letters that you brandish so triumphantly?

Barb. No! I burned the worthless things when I ground your worthless love beneath my feet.

Burr. What, then, are those very official-looking documents?

Barb. The papers you entrusted to your host, the wealthy owner of this town and isle; all your traitorous plans, your secret correspondence with despots abroad who seek, through you, to break the Union and destroy the government.

Burr. And is an Irishman's honor then so frail a thing as woman's love? Well, give me my property. (*Seizing her arm*).

Barb. Not so, my love. You are desperate I see. But one cry from me, and the guard will be upon you, and you arrested with all the proof upon your person.

Burr. (*Releasing her.*) But you will not cry.

Barb. Unless you force me.

Burr. And you will restore my property.

Barb. Not so long as I have eating at my heart the wrong you did me.

Burr. I accept the terms. What is the wrong that thus has changed your trusting love to hate?

Barb. Must I repeat what you have known so well? Did you not woo and win me from my quiet humble home, from innocence and peace?

Burr. Most true. It is the sweetest memory of my life! Through all my troubled years that joy rides on like some bright star above the clouds of night.

Barb. And then to cast me from you like a worthless thing to die of my own despair!

Burr. That is a lie. Pardon my rough words, but I am the one wronged, the one to complain.

Barb. You? You? Come now, this is audacity without parallel. What a fool you think me to treat me thus!

Burr. Your conduct certainly warrants such belief. Listen, Barbara. When first we met you were but a school girl, and I a man who had knocked about the world until wearied with its dreary sameness. I saw you to love as I never thought to love again. It was not only your rare beauty but your quaint originality and force of character that made you, not a man's plaything, but his equal to soothe, comfort, and sustain.

Barb. And you wearied of all these charms so soon!

Burr. You provoke me. This weakness is unworthy of you, my love. You measure my love with a pack thread. After that fatal duel in which I killed mine enemy and the world killed me, I turned to you as my only solace, my only hope.

Barb. It is such a pity you kept all this hid in your own heart, not even deigning to answer my poor letters.

Burr. I never received them. I have been surrounded a hundred deep by spies, to which you, my love, have added your sweet self to work my ruin. My letters were intercepted and destroyed.

Barb. Ah! If I could believe all this.

Burr. Your inner heart believes it. Your better instincts guide you to the truth. Why, Barbara, do you know why I shot that man with the sunlight blazing on his face?

Barb. For a political difference that he made personal.

Burr. Not at all. 'Tis true, the world puts me at fault, finding no cause for my deadly malice. It was because he coupled your dear name with mine for scorn and laughter among his drunken comrades.

Barb. Can this be true?

Burr. True! I would it were not true. Before I killed that man I had the world before me; a past that made me loved, and troops of friends to insure me a brilliant future. After the howling mob of Puritans, headed by this demagogue, whose cunning passes for genius, succeeded in closing against me my field of old success and drove me to try a new, I accepted the tempting offers of monarchs abroad to build an empire on a portion of this frail republic. And do you know, Barbara, the hope that held me to this desperate work—the one bright star that shone along my troubled sea, my guide to empire?

Barb. How can I know, not knowing you?

Burr. So it seems. Well, I put my life, my name,

my fortune on the hazard of this scheme, not only that I might fulfill my destiny but sweeten it with your companionship; I would place a crown upon that lovely head and have your love to live upon and your rare intellect to aid me in my public cares and lift a burden from my dreary life.

Barb. Ah me, I ought not to listen,—I know—I know your words are false. I have that within that warns me of your treachery, and yet I must submit! I love you still. There, take the proofs and count me out, too small a thing for you to keep me even in your memory.

Burr. No, keep the papers, Barbara. They are safer in your hands than mine. And stay with me for I need your clear brain as much as I need your love. Hold! you can do me a service, a great service. His Excellency has ordered my arrest. He proclaims me traitor and calls on all good citizens to give no aid to my endeavors. Give me those papers; take these, carry them to the President and say you risked your life in getting them. And if His Excellency can spare time from the embraces of his saddle-tinted love he will read therein that I only mean to settle lands I purchased in Louisiana, and so be put at fault. I need time; this will fetch delay.

Barb. Be assured I will—and Oh! my love, let this one service plead in my behalf!

Burr. No need of pleading, dearest. You hold my

future, my heart and hope within the hollow of your little hand. Soon return.

Barb. Where shall I find you?

Burr. In Mexico, my love. The halls of Montezuma shall know a king once more. *Au revoir* till then. (*Exit Barbara.*) Go your ways, you little fool! By the Lord, though, she came near to proving my ruin. Here comes this padded chicken cock with a nation's care upon his military front and a file of men behind.

*Enter CAPTAIN WILKINSON and troops followed by FINK,
OLD GET and others.*

Sergeant. Halt!

Captain. Colonel Burr, it is my painful duty to arrest you.

Burr. By what authority, sir?

Captain. By that of the President and Secretary of War.

Burr. Pardon me, Captain; I must have a warrant from court of proper jurisdiction. There has been no proclamation establishing martial law.

Captain. I take the responsibility. Seize him, Sergeant.

Sergeant. Take this man in custody. (*Soldiers do not move.*) Do you hear me—seize this man!

First Soldier. We wont obey; we go with Burr.—
(*Cries of "Burr"—"Burr"—the crowd cheers.*)

Captain. Why this is mutiny!

Burr. It certainly resembles something of the sort.

Captain. Doubtless of your cunning.

Burr. Captain, give me your sword—do n't hesitate, it is your only safety. (*Captain gives sword.*) Comrades, I am Aaron Burr, a soldier late of the Federal army. I thank you for the honesty that makes you refuse to execute an illegal order, and I thank you for the impulse that bids you seek to follow my fortunes; but, comrades, in the hazardous expedition I have on hand I need men, not deserters. Were I to accept your offer I would justify the government in arresting us. You are gallant soldiers enlisted on your honor and must return to duty. Fall in. By the right flank, forward march! Sergeant, march them to camp. Captain, having restored to you your company, I have the honor to restore to you your sword.

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

SCENE: Same as in former acts. FINK and MAHALA.

Mahala. What's up, Mike?

Mike. My back's up for one thing.

Mahala. Like a tom cat. Back rounded, claws and teeth out, and tail bigger nor its head. What riles you, Fink?

Fink. Those damned fool regulators. They had n't the pluck to hunt down and capture the devil, Wolf; but

now that he is gone they are ragin' like catamounts and are gettin' a force to clean us out, they say, because the lady let him escape. I say what's become of the lady?

Mahala. Well, Fink, there you've got me. She disappeared all of a suddint, no one knows where, and the boss has been goin' on like mad. He walked and walked his room all last night, muttering to himself like one possessed.

Fink. The troops are gettin' off, bound for New Orleans. I wished the roosters'd stay a little longer.

Mahala. Why, I thought you wanted 'em gone.

Fink. Yes, when they was talkin' of 'restin' our Colonel Burr. But that's over now. The Captain give it up like a sensible fellow—and then I did n't like the way they had of walkin' round you like crows round a sick lamb. But now that the regulators are a' gettin' up mischief, I would n't mind havin' the roosters take a hand in the scrimmage.

Mahala. The regulators will be down on us the moment the soldiers go.

Fink. Should n't wonder—cuss 'em. I say, Mahala, my may apple, my dog-wood blossom, when'er you and me goin' to tie to—eh?

Mahala. When you give up boatin' and settle down to an honest life.

Fink. Now, puss, do n't say that. I tell you, my red-

bird of the wilderness, there's more hard dollars in a broad horn than in forty quarter sections.

Mahala. Yes, and a sweetheart in every town you tie up at. No, Mr. Fink, I don't want part of a husband, I want all or none.

Fink. Well, you've got me fore and aft—I am all your'n; let me grapple.

Enter OLD GET.

Old Get. Throw off thar—throw off, I'm a comin'!
(*Pushing in between them.*) Give the old man a chance.

Mahala. Go away, you scare-crow, you string-haltered, spavined old creeter'!

Old Get. Oh! You, hollyhock of the garden patch—Jehosiphath, aint she handsome! Amputate my off limb, I wants to hug ye'r.

Fink. Pole off, pole off thar! That aint a saplin' for you to tie to. I've secured that cargo.

Old Get. Don't ye be deluded, young gal, by his insinuatins' ways. He's got a wife and family this minute jist a weepin' for him, the ornery cuss!

Fink. See here, old man, keep your lies for your own use. You're breedin' a protuberance on that nose of your'n.

Old Get. Come on—come on, young Arabian! Hail Columby! Who's afeard? As for this little gal, I warn her agin boatmen. (*Sings.*)

The boatman come, he blow his hawn,
Look out old man, yer shote am gone.

(*Chorus all.*)

Oh! ho! boatman row,
We're floatin' on the waters of the O-hi-o.

Fink. Where have you bin, anyhow?

Old Get. A bar huntin', and I tell you I made a mity narrow escape with my life.

Fink. Put your fascinatin' eye on him, May. Here comes a lie.

Old Get. Well, ye see I'd been explorin' the woods with one eye out fur Indians and tother out for bars, and had n't seen either, when I leaned up agin a big oak to rest, and while I was a restin' I heard a scratchin' and whinin' noise inside. Them's coons, possums, or young bars, says I. I sot down my rifle, husked my wamus, and went up that thar tree like a squirrel. About twenty feet up I found the trunk broke off and the tree holler. Without thinkin' what I was doing I jist slipped down, and way at the butt I found them little bars. I had them cubs in no time and slung 'em over my shoulder, and concluded to climb back, when, bless your soul, I found I could n't. The inside wus soft and slippy. Every foot I climbed up I fell back two. I knowed I could eat them little bars and I could drink all the wiskey in my flask, and then old Get could jest peg out.

Fink. Did you repent of all the lies you 've told?

Mahala. And all the chicken you stole?

Old Get. Well, for a real truth tellin', honest Christian man, I was n't so much alarmed about the hereafter as the here. But I jist felt in my bones that the Lord was n't goin' to leave me to perish, and sure enough at that minit I heard a noise of growlin' and scratchin' on the outside and I knew the old she bar was a comin'. Then, Oh, Lord! says I, it is goin' to be a bar fight of magnitude, and I drewed my knife. Then the hole above was darkened and down she comes rump foremost. An idea struck me. When she got in reach I jist seized her by the tail and stuck my knife in her hind quarters, and the way that bar scratched, growled and kicked me out of that hole was a caution. I caught on the rim as she went over the top and I gave a yell as she tumbled and went a canterin' into the brush a twistin' her old rump as if she felt ridiculus.

Fink. Oh, get out!

Old Get. Fact, Fink.

Fink. You 'r a failin', old man; I heerd that bar story when I wus knee high to a duck on the Monongahela.

Old Get. Young man, ef you begin a lyin' that ar way, the devil'll catch you afore you are gray. Let the choir sing.

Mahala. Well, I've got my work to do and can't stay here a hearin' you fellows swap lies.

Fink. Farewell, my dog-wood blossom.

Old Get. Goodby, little hollyhock. (*Exit MAHALA.*)

Enter COLONEL BURR.

Burr. Fink, you must select about ten trusty men to cross the river yonder and follow a trail you find up the hollow, till you reach a camp, where you 'll find a wounded man and a woman; surround and capture without killing and fetch them here. Mind, you are to hurt no one. Make a litter and bring in the wounded man.

Fink. All right, Colonel, we'll be on the trail in half an hour. (*Exeunt FINK and OLD GET.*)

Burr. Now for a settlement with this mad fool who betrayed my trust. (*Enter from the house BLANNERHASSETT with two dueling pistols in his hand.*) He comes, pale and insane with wrath.

Blen. Aaron Burr, I thought to shoot you on sight, with no more warning of my deadly intent than you gave me of your treachery. But my own life is not of so much value to me that I care to save it, and if in my seeking your life you take mine, it will be peace to me and a fitting end to your hellish conduct.

Burr. I never refuse a satisfaction of the sort you ask, whether the demand is well founded or not. Before we proceed to that honor I wish to say a word.

Blen. I warn you, Aaron Burr, that my patience is exhausted. There is naught that you can say to change

my purpose, and your attempt will only drive me mad. Take your choice. (*Offering pistols.*)

Burr. Excuse me. I am well aware that a man who could so betray my confidence is quite capable of assassination. It is I who should demand satisfaction.

Blen. Treachery for treachery. What law of honor bound me to one who stole into my household to rob it of peace and honor? Take your choice, sir.

Burr. The word honor, my friend, had better be dropped between us. All the honor sheltered by your roof is scarcely worth our breath.

Blen. What do you mean! What do you mean, you scoundrel?

Burr. I mean that a man who makes his roof the shelter for his neighbor's wife leaves honor at the threshold.

Blen. She was my wife to you as she was before God. This, then, is your excuse—this is to palliate your crime? God give me patience! I shall throttle him—tear his lying tongue from his throat. Aaron Burr, will you do as I bid?

Burr. Certainly; but I will say that I have no crime to palliate.

Blen. You did not steal into my house as a friend and win that woman from me as a devil?

Burr. Certainly not.

Blen. You have not hid her in your camp?

Burr. Certainly not.

Blen. You lie—you lie! I speak of what I know. Will you take your weapon and your place, or shall I shoot you like a dog?

Burr. Be patient, Harman Blennerhassett. You shall have all that you demand and probably more than you expect. I do not shrink from putting one more fool out of the world.

Blen. You think to kill me?

Burr. Most assuredly. In sixty seconds by my watch (*taking it out*) I will end this controversy between us forever. Now, let me tell you, sir, before you die that you merit your doom. I am the man aggrieved. I trusted my honor, my life, my all to your keeping as a gentleman, and you repaid that trust by betraying me to mine enemies.

Blen. Hold trust with a scoundrel who treacherously took advantage of my hospitality to do me a most foul wrong?

Burr. It was your duty as a gentleman to call me to account. After you were certain of your facts you could have punished me as your vengeance dictated. Time is up, Mr. Blennerhassett. Give me either weapon. I suppose both are loaded. Now, take your stand by yonder bush. That will give us the proper distance.

Blen. I want no such space—I want it arm's length, face to face, and muzzle at breast.

Burr. Mr. Blennerhassett, I am a gentleman and not an assassin. Either we fight like men, or you may carry out your first intent and shoot me where I stand.

Blen. Fight me here. Who is to measure distance? Give the word. All this is a mockery under which you hope to escape to your love.

Burr. Enough, sir; you are wasting breath in talk that lately you protested. Take your place, sir, or shoot me. I want this ended.

Blen. And I. (*Starting.*)

Burr. One word—fire when you reach your place as it suits you, as I count three. But mind, the one who misses forfeits his life, and the winner has the right to shorten distance till his aim is death.

Blen. I understand. (*Takes his place.*)

Burr. One, two, three. (*BLANNERHASSETT fires.*) And now, before I end this wretched business, will you please explain why you charge me with seducing this woman from you?

Blen. Her own writing—read. (*Gives note.*)

Burr. (*Reads.*) There is no address.

Blen. None was needed.

Burr. Yes, for this was not addressed to me.

Blen. Who else?

Burr. Wolf, the renegade.

Blen. Wolf, the renegade!

Burr. None other. Learn, sir, what you might have known had you retained your senses. The beast whose wife you stole followed you here to murder you both. For some unknown reason he surrendered himself, had his life spared by your wife, and in return promised to restore her their child. On this promise she favored his escape. On this account she attempted a correspondence, for the man while escaping was terribly wounded—

Blen. Great heavens, can this be true?

Burr. This letter found where she embarked last night may tell you more. (*Takes from his pocket a letter.*)

Blen. (*Opens and reads.*) “Before I cross this river to die in the wilderness beyond—for you have driven me into these wilds with no place wherein to find a shelter or a friend—I beg of you, as my last prayer, to take up the search I shall have to abandon and find my poor lost little one. It was from my great love of her that I listened to Victor and aided him to escape. I had no thought, Oh, my love, that this would have so offended you, and yet I feared to tell you. I can say no more. Oh! my love, my love, I gave up home, heaven, and my own child for you, and now in sight of a cruel death I swear that to you I have been true in thought, word, and deed.”—My God! What have I done? I have driven her forth to perish in

the wide wilderness. She is dead, and I her murderer! Sir, you were right to kill me—in mercy now put me out of my misery.

Burr. Come, come, man, it is not so bad as that. I have sent some trusty fellows on the trail, and if naught goes amiss this fair woman will yet be saved.

(Enter Messenger.)

Messenger. Letters for Colonel Burr.

(BURR opens hastily and reads :)

“Your boats have been seized at Pittsburgh and an officer with troops is on his way with orders to seize and carry you in irons to Washington.”

Burr. So the French Virginian springs his trap before the prey is in the net. It is unlucky, though. A few more days and I were far beyond his reach.

(Shouts and firing heard. Enter OLD GET.)

Old Get. The regulators is on us!

Burr. The troops are gone, and I have sent away the best of our men. *(To BLENNERHASSETT, who sits with his face in his hands.)* Rouse up, man; your people are being killed, your home will be destroyed.

Blen. It is not worth the saving. Let me die amid its ruin.

(Boatmen and soldiers hurry in armed.)

Burr. Rally here, my men! cut loose the boats! *(A glare of light, showing the house to be on fire, flashes up.)*

What! so soon? The rogues are quick and sudden in their attack. Fall back upon the camp—steady—steady men.

CURTAIN.

ACT V.

SCENE: As in previous acts. The house in ruins, trees leafless and snow falling. OLD GET and MAHALA.

Old Get. Winter's come as suddint as the regulators and jist about as onpleasant.

Mahala. Ef it had n't been for the Colonel's boat we'd a froze to death.

Old Get. Ef it had n't been for that same Kunnel we would n't a' lived to be froze. Jehosiphat! but he did make his fellers fight. The little handful was as firm under him as a rock, and fierce as tigers. We made them regulators take to water—git up and git, although about ten times our number. I tell ye, gal, there's nothin' like havin' a gineral in a scrimmage. The boss hisself was n't worth a continental cuss.

Mahala. What ailed him?

Old Get. Lord only knows. He seemed all of a daze. The men had to pull him out of the fight. He jist looked and acted like a dumb beast in a blaze. Did you see me

fight, little gal? Ef it had n't been for me and the Kunnel wher'd you bin, eh?

Mahala. I got sight of you onct behind a tree.

Old Get. And did n't I stand firm?

Mahala. Agin that tree—yes; you was a huggin' that tree as if it had been your sweetheart.

Old Get. That was high old strategy, ye see. It was my pint of observation to command knowingly. Ye see, that was jist whar I saw how to turn their flank and pepper 'em in their rear. Me an' Kunnel Burr got 'em bad behind, and that's what scared 'em worst. As we was light handed I never leveled old Betsy 'till I could take from three to five in a row. Why, fellers died here by dozens jist a wonderin' what ailed 'em. Men, I'll venture, went home to their families, took their suppers and did n't know 'till they poled for bed that they was mortally wounded. When I was in Gettisbury—(*Mahala steals off unnoticed by OLD GET.*)—the British came down on us all of a suddint and began firing bombs into us. I was a mere boy then, but what does I do but pick up them bombs afore they could explode and throw 'em back. I'd a killed off the hull army but for an unfortunate bomb that exploded right in my commissary. It knocked me into the middle of next week, and when I come 'round they was a buryin' me with the honors of war. I tell ye, gal,—

Hello, the specimen female has disappeared! Well, women has no 'preciation for good men at any time.

(Enter BURR, meeting OLD GET. as the last exits.)

Evening to you, Kunnel—bad weather, Kunnel.

Burr. A rough day, comrade. My life is in its wane. Success no longer waits upon my will. There was a time when fortune smiled and fate seemed at my bidding. Then, fair women and brave men loved and feared me. But since that fatal moment, when with cool deliberate aim I sent the leaden messenger of death to smite mine enemy, all seems changed. What I seize upon fades to nothingness, and my cherished projects turn to ill. Women fear and men shun me. This fair isle I found a paradise, is turned in one short day to desolate nakedness. Its peaceful loving life went out in violence, and yet it was no deed of mine. All that I touch drops to swift decay. I dreamed to build an empire in the mighty West. The potent governments of earth gave me means. What could be fairer than my future? And now my boats are seized, my men arrested, my seeming friends turned traitors, while armed emissaries hurry on to take me back in irons. Well, well, I look the invisible calmy in-the face, and let the future be what it may, no man shall question me in doubt upon my courage or my power to hurt. I will fulfill my destiny. The hand that gave the poison to the snake and to the cruel tiger its ravenous appetite gave

man his impulse, be it good or ill, and I will do the evil I was born to do. When I die no monument built by loving hands shall mark my narrow bed, but for ages after my epitaph shall be my name, and men will say a dangerous man—no one crossed his path and lived. (*Enter MIKE FINK.*) Well, Fink, what success?

Fink. I found the camp, Wolf wounded, an old medicine man making him worse, and Mrs. Blennerhassett nursing him.

Burr. Is he much hurt?

Fink. Could n't be much worse and live.

Burr. You brought him in?

Fink. Aye, aye, sir; we obeyed orders; made a litter for the wounded man and toted him down; madam treats him as she would a child, tho' its my opinion he will be in hell afore he reaches here. They're comin'.

Enter number of men carrying WOLF, followed by MRS. BLENNERHASSETT, and at a distance BLENNERHASSETT.

Burr. How fares it with you, man?

Wolf. I think this little trip has about finished the work.

Mrs. Blen. Oh, Colonel, can not aid be obtained? Have you not a surgeon with your men?

Wolf. (*Lifting himself up.*) All the surgeons in the world could not give me an hour's life. Where is Blennerhassett? I want a word with him before I die.

Blen. I am here.

Wolf. You sought my wife; I leave you my widow. Do not start, man—it is all right. You saved her from a brute.

Blen. I never knew the wrong I did till now.

Wolf. The knowledge comes a little late. Better late than never. That is all bosh. You can now repay the wrong, if any wrong you did. I made her wretched. It was the husband's right. You made her happy; it was the lover's right.

Mrs. Blen. Oh, Victor, do not speak thus! You will yet live; we will nurse you back to life—we will have a surgeon—you are only exhausted by this moving.

Wolf. A priest were better than a doctor now. I make you all my confessor. I have sinned to the best of my ability. There is no crime I have not committed save what a gentleman can not do. I have not forged to obtain your property, but by the slow torture of abuse I have made your life more terrible than death, and now, in expiation I give my life to you and not against my will. I beg you to observe I have lived a gentleman and die a man.

Mrs. Blen. Do not think of dying, Victor! We will save you yet.

Wolf. It is not what I think but feel. I am dead in all save speech. A priest who could absolve us all were

best. The dying sinner he could confess and the living sinners he might absolve by marriage. Give me your hand, wife—my left—the right is in its grave. I have been a poor devil, though a gentleman; I made your existence a misery; try to forgive if you can not forget.

Mrs. Blen. Can you forgive?

Wolf. With all my heart. Small difference. Here, Harman, take the blessed of the wicked. The chill reaches my heart, and night is gathering on my eyes—you will find the child—ah! (*Falls back dead.*)

Burr. With him the world is ended.

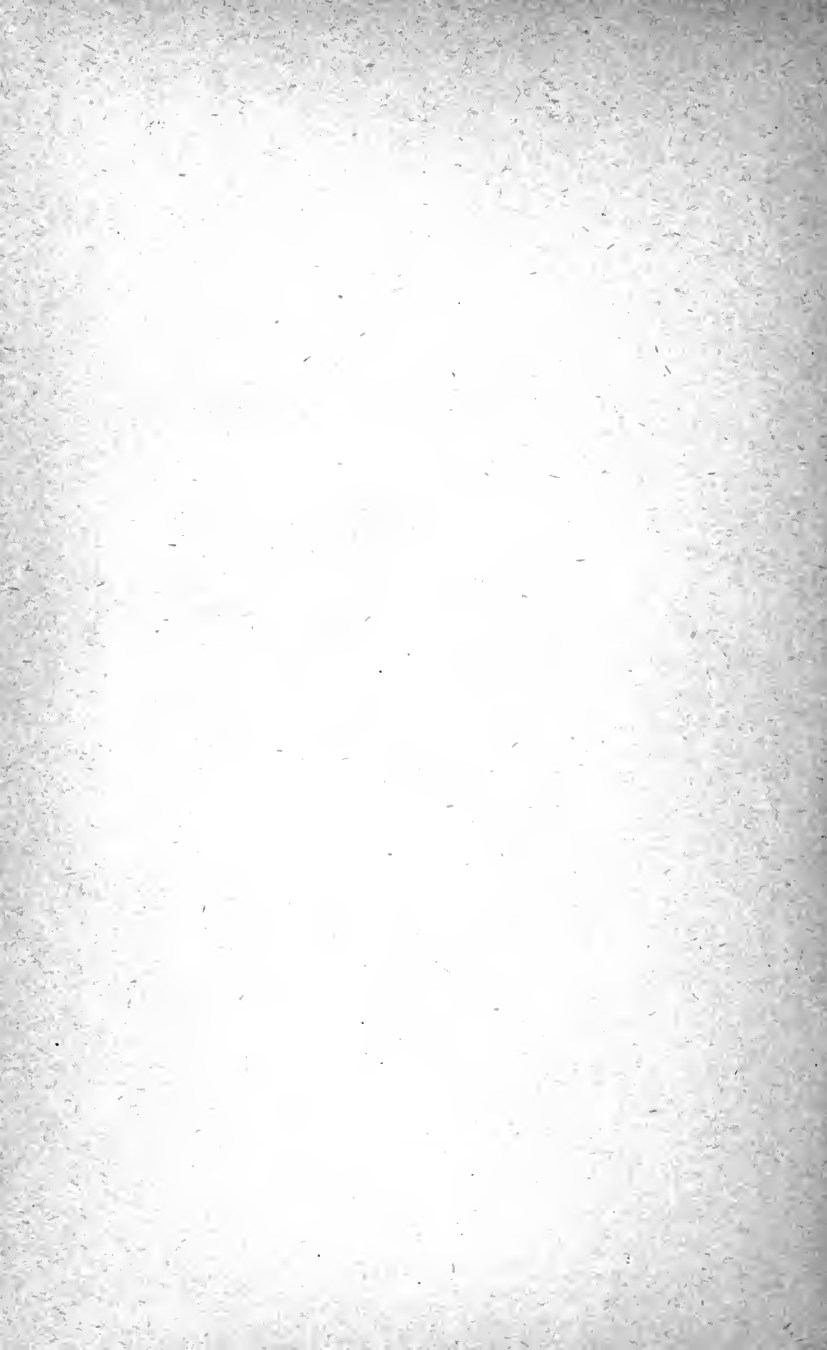
Blen. Carry him to the garden. We will make his grave amid its ruins, and his requiem shall be these wintry winds and the murmur of the river's waves as they sweep by his lonely tomb. (*They carry off WOLF.*)

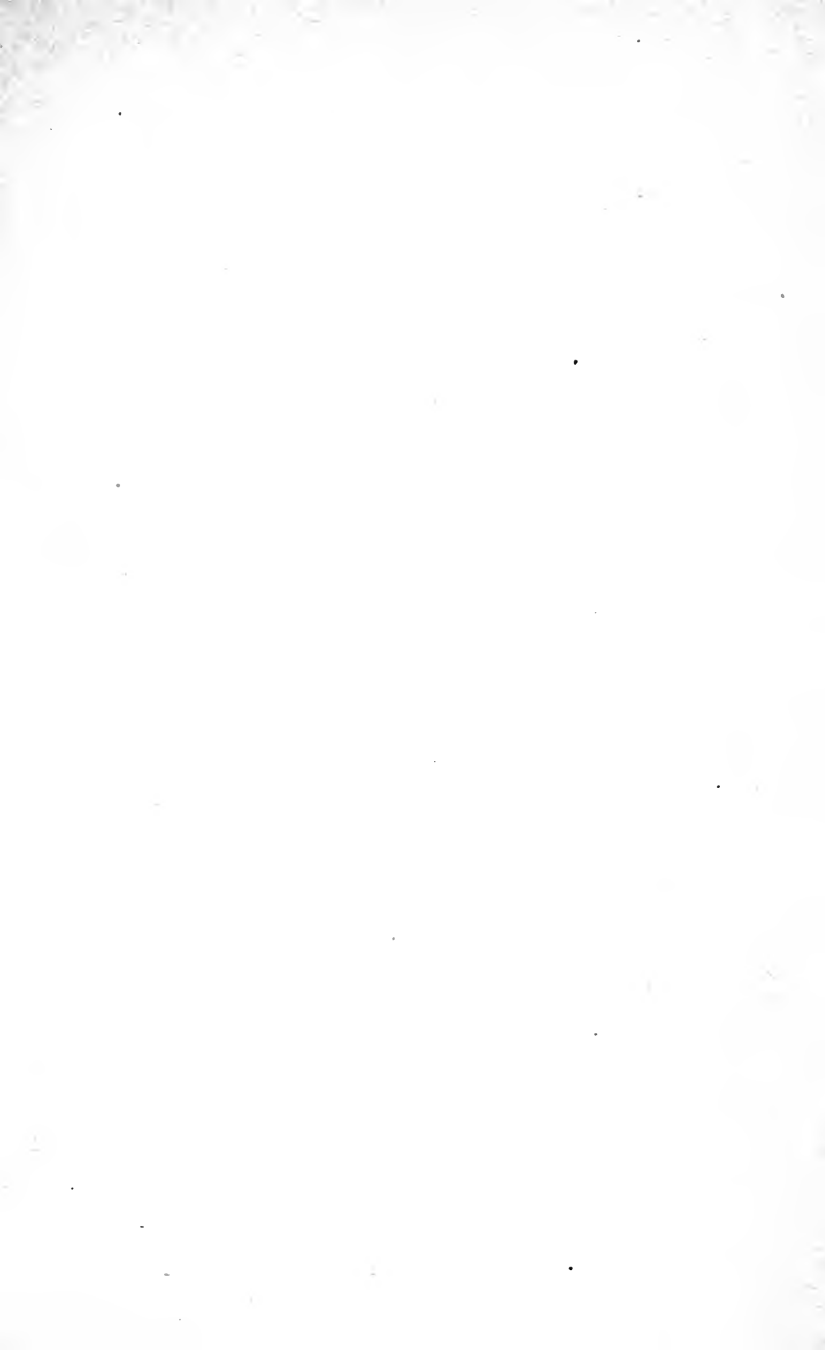
Burr. And now, my friends, what will you do with yourselves?

Blen. Drop down the river till we reach New Orleans, then sail for Europe. Will you not fly with us?

Burr. Fly? My name is Aaron Burr—I go to face mine enemies, demand their proof, and defy their malice.

CURTAIN.





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